University of Phoenix®

College of Doctoral Studies

College of Doctoral Studies Dissertation Guide

A Comprehensive Dissertation Development and Alignment Handbook

*Please note: This document is subject to changes, which will be recorded in Appendix B: Document Change Log. Students and faculty should check back for changes and download the current version often.

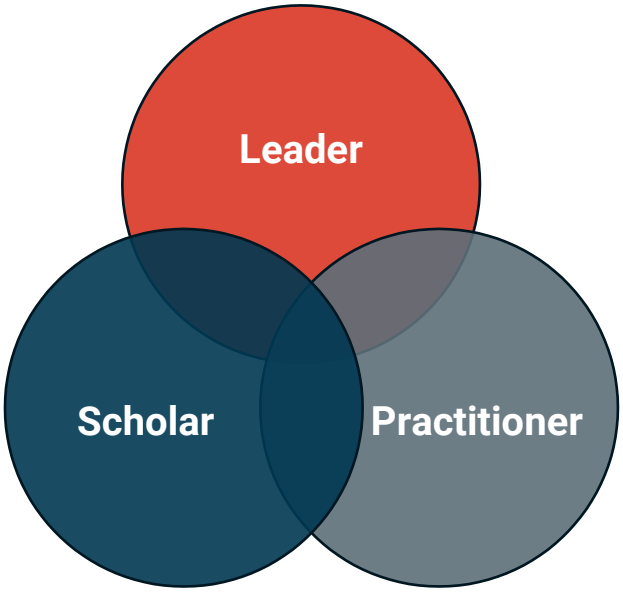
(Last Updated 8/4/2021)

Overview

This guide provides comprehensive information on University of Phoenix College of Doctoral Studies practitioner program dissertation development steps and criteria. The overview section describes the dissertation process and dissertation team. The Topic Selection and Alignment to the Degree Program section describes each of the practitioner degree programs offered at the College of Doctoral Studies and discusses potential areas for research. The Method and Design Selection and Alignment to Research Objectives describes the research methods and provides a brief overview of the various associated designs to assist in comparison and selection between the different designs.

The Research Design Selection and Alignment provides detailed information regarding the designs to assist in understanding their applicability in research and provide resources for further understanding of the designs.

In addition, this document describes the five phases of the dissertation process and provides guidance on development and alignment of the prospectus and the dissertation chapters associated with each of the five phases. The Dissertation Criteria Assessment (DCA) is a developmental and progression feedback tool used to monitor students in meeting dissertation assessment criteria throughout the Doctoral Journey Life Cycle and Dissertation Phases. The Institutional Review Board (IRB) and Oral Defense sections briefly describe these important dissertation journey milestones, and the Final Dissertation Editing (FDE) section describes the dissertation formatting requirements. Finally, Appendix A: Dissertation Template provides a template for the full dissertation, including information and strategies on completion of each section of the dissertation.



The practitioner programs are situated within our Scholar-Practitioner-Leader™ (SPL) model and aligned to our mission of developing doctoral leaders who conduct research for creative action and guide diverse organizations through effective decision-making.

We hope that you will find this guide useful throughout every phase of the doctoral process and remember to enjoy the journey and allow it to help you realize your passion by helping you create research that will contribute to your professional field!

The Dissertation Process

The dissertation process occurs in five phases, as depicted below. The information below the figure describes the five phases and deliverables further.

Students should use courses in each phase to build upon each phase deliverable. Students are allowed to dovetail course materials from content and research courses to build upon each Dissertation Journey Phase.

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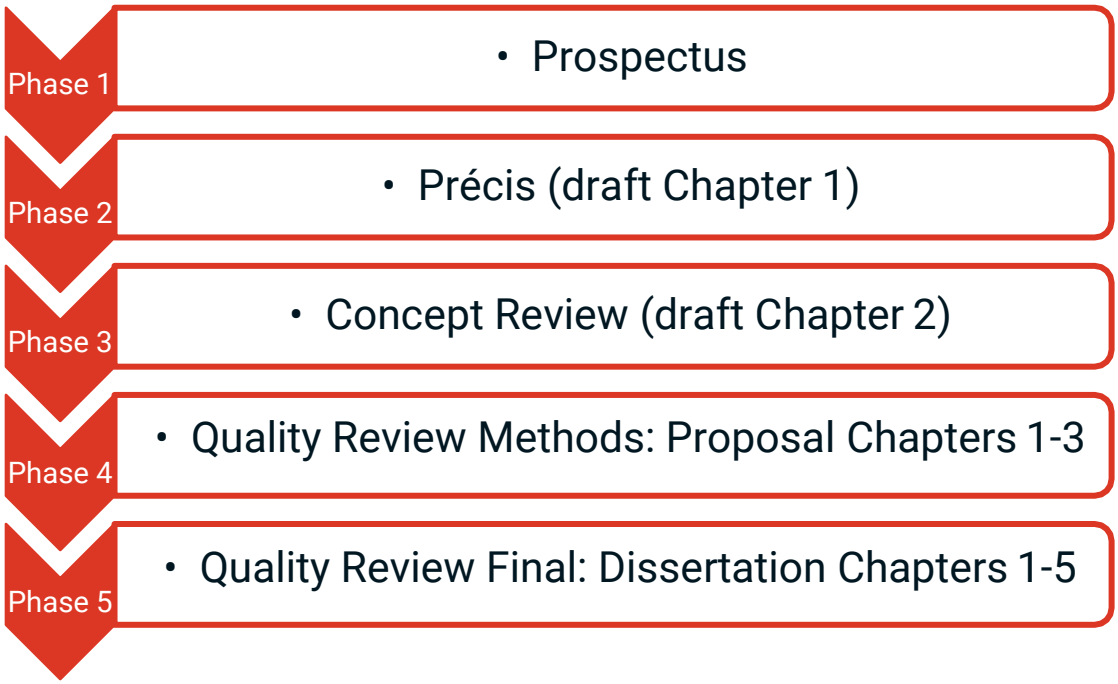


Phase	Work on the phase in the following courses (enrolled prior to 1/2/2020)	Work on the phase in the following courses (enrolled 1/2/2020 and after)
Doctoral Phase 1 – Prospectus: Outline of the Planned Dissertation Study	DOC/700 (5 weeks) LDR/711A (8 weeks) RES/709 (8 weeks) RES/724 (8 weeks) Qualitative Methods and Design DOC/705R - Year 1 Residency (5 days) - **Deliverable: Prospectus**	BUS/700, EDD/700, or DHA/700 (8 weeks) LDR/711A (8 weeks) RES/709 (8 weeks) DOC/714S – (8 weeks) - **Deliverable: Prospectus**
Doctoral Phase 2 – Précis	Phase 1 courses RES/710 (8 weeks) RES/720 (8 weeks) Two core program courses (8 weeks each) DOC/720R - Year 2 Residency (3 days) - **Deliverable: Précis**	Phase 1 courses RES/724 (8 weeks) Program content requirement (8 weeks) Program content requirement (8 weeks) DOC/715 (8 weeks) - **Deliverable: Précis**
Doctoral Phase 3 – Concept Review	Three core program courses (8 weeks each) DOC/723 (8 weeks) - **Deliverable: Concept Review**	Two content program courses (8 weeks each) DOC/723 (8 weeks) - **Deliverable: Concept Review**

Phase	Work on the phase in the following courses (enrolled prior to 1/2/2020)	Work on the phase in the following courses (enrolled 1/2/2020 and after)
Doctoral Phase 4 – QRM: Proposal (Chapters 1 – 3)	Research elective course (8 weeks) One core program course (8 weeks) Year 3 Residency (8 days comprised of a 5-day course and a 3-day course) *DOC/741 (8 weeks) – **Deliverable: Proposal Chapters 1-3**	Two content program courses (8 weeks each) *DOC/741 (8 weeks) – **Deliverable: Proposal Chapters 1-3**
Doctoral Phase 5 –QRF: Dissertation (Chapters 1 – 5)	Two core program courses (8 weeks each) *DOC/742 (8 weeks) – **Deliverable: Dissertation and Oral Defense**	IRB Review and Approval (occurring concurrently) One Content Program Course (8 weeks) DOC/719S (8 weeks) *DOC/742 (8 weeks)– **Deliverable: Dissertation and Oral Defense**

*Dissertation continuing enrollment courses are available and require written Chair and URM approval prior to scheduling.

The Dissertation Committee

Newer Programs (DBA 004, EDD 004, DM 005, DHA 004; enrolled 1/2/2020 and after)

Students enrolled in the College of Doctoral Studies at the University of Phoenix are expected to be dedicated, self-motivated, responsible, and independent learners accountable for the development of their dissertation. Doctoral faculty members are dedicated to supporting and guiding students to the completion of the doctorate.

Doctoral Seminar courses* are writing-intensive classes for students. The faculty provides guidance, review, and feedback on dissertation deliverables to support the student in building a quality, robust dissertation. Students should be in Doctoral Seminar classes for full reviews.

Role of Doctoral Student – Dissertation Phases 1-5

Doctoral students are accountable for writing all chapters of the proposal and dissertation while enrolled in dissertation classes and independently outside of designated dissertation courses. Students select dissertation topics that reflect gaps in the literature or problems identified from their practitioner experience. Students must choose dissertation topics aligned with their degree programs.

Doctoral students should use work completed in content classes to build Chapter 2: The Literature Review. Using work from prior classes or dovetailing enables students to capitalize on their work without duplicating effort. Doctoral students will rely on committee feedback to build robust, cohesive, and quality research projects aligned with the College of Doctoral Studies' mission to enhance students' positions as a Scholar-Practitioner-Leaders (SPL) Model in their industries.

The Dissertation Committee includes three College of Doctoral Studies Staff Faculty members (chair and two committee members, University Research Methodologist (URM) and Panel Validator (PV)), each having a specialized role. The Dissertation Committee is assigned to work with student cohorts at different stages.

Role of Chair – Assigned Phase 2 at the Start of DOC/715*

The Dissertation Chair is the subject matter expert for content and discipline relevance. The Dissertation Chair leads the research problem development, research feasibility, rigor, and overall quality of the proposal and dissertation phases. Dissertation Chairs facilitate DOC/715, DOC/723, DOC/742, and the DOC/742 respective continuing enrollment courses. The Dissertation Chair leads the Oral Defense.

Role of the University Research Methodologist (URM) (first committee member) – Assigned upon completion of Dissertation Phase 2

The URM leads proposal and dissertation research method and design to ensure alignment of methodological strategies, rigor, and quality. The URM facilitates DOC/741 and DOC/741 continuing enrollment courses. The URM and the Dissertation Chair are assigned to cohorts at the same time. The URM reviews the research problem, purpose, research questions/hypothesis, and research method design at DOC/715 and DOC/723 for alignment. The URM participates in the Oral Defense.

Role of the Panel Validator (second committee member) – Assigned upon completion of Dissertation Phase 4

The PV is the subject matter expert who reviews Chapters 1-3 for scope and provides feedback to ensure Chapters 4 and 5 offer robust and innovative industry recommendations aligned with the SPL Model. The PV participates in the Oral defense and provides final APA and formatting review for the completed dissertation.

Dissertation Staff Faculty are not assigned to students but cohorts. *Chairs and URMs are tentatively assigned at Phase 2. The permanent assignment is made after DOC/741.

*DOC/715, DOC/723, DOC/741, DOC/741A, DOC/741B, DOC/742, DOC/742A, DOC/742B, and all continuing-enrollment extension courses.

All Other Programs (enrolled prior to 1/2/2020)

Students in all other programs working with selected dissertation committees will continue to work with those faculty members. For students with selected dissertation committees, if a faculty resigns or students wish to change a faculty member, students will be assigned a staff faculty member. There are situations where changes in dissertation committee faculty may delay student progression based on new faculty feedback and incomplete student documents.

Topic Selection and Alignment to the Degree Program

The initial step in achieving dissertation alignment is selecting a topic aligned with the program of study, also referred to as the industry or discipline of study. The topic should reflect an existing problem within the industry. The following information provides brief examples of dissertation topics that align with the various practitioner programs currently offered as University of Phoenix doctoral studies. For detailed program information, visit https://www.phoenix.edu/degrees/doctorate.html. Please note, specializations are for program-specific versions prior to 1/2/2020.

Doctor of Business Administration (DBA)
Dissertation topics for the DBA program may focus on various commercial ventures including business startup activities, small to medium businesses, business operations, business processes, finance, or marketing activities.

Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership (EDD)
The EDD program focuses on K-12 education. The dissertation may focus on broad aspects associated with these educational levels including test scores, drop out decisions, and examining academic success.

Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership with a specialization in Curriculum and Instruction (EDD/CI)
The CI specialization of the EDD program often focuses on the curricula during the K-12 educational programs. The dissertation may also explore teaching methods, strategies, and instruction used in the design or implementation of new educational programs.

Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership with a specialization in Educational Technology (EDD/ET)
The ET specialization within the EDD program focus**es** on how technology is used or can be used to facilitate learning. The emphasis may include examination of currently used techniques or development of recommendations for improving use of technology in the classroom.

Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership with a specialization in Higher Education Administration (EDD/HEA)
The HEA specialization within the EDD program focuses on college- and university-level instruction. The dissertation may focus on broad aspects associated with higher education including student retention, student engagement, drop out decisions, instructional approaches and strategies, design, or implementation of new educational programs, or use of technology to facilitate learning.

Doctor of Health Administration (DHA)
The DHA program is intended to develop executive level health care professionals. Added program focus is on health administration research within clinical settings, hospital settings, or home health settings. Dissertations often focus on policies, processes, and procedures involved in the delivery of care, leadership of health care professionals and support staff, resources, and cost effectiveness and efficiency.

Doctor of Management in Organizational Leadership (DM)
The DM program focuses on organizational leadership and management. Dissertation writers may explore leadership behavior, leadership skills, human resources, employee satisfaction, employee engagement, management of organizational resources, operational processes, change management, or business processes and procedures within an organization.

Doctor of Management in Organizational Leadership with a specialization in Information Systems and Technology (DM/IST)
The DM/IST program focuses on the use of technology within organizations. Relevant dissertation topics include the current or proposed use of information technology (IT) within the organizational setting.

Method and Design Selection and Alignment to Research Objectives

Once the student selects a dissertation topic and identifies a problem, the student should develop a research purpose that aligns with the problem then select a research method and design aligned with the purpose. Note that alignment between the purpose and design is an iterative process; the purpose should be modified to reflect the selected design.

The following information describes the three research methods. The most commonly used method within practitioner doctoral programs is qualitative followed by quantitative. The third method, mixed-method, combines qualitative and quantitative approaches.

Overview of Methods and Designs

Qualitative Research

- Qualitative research is used to address a social problem by gaining an understanding of participants' opinions, perceptions, and feelings, or by reviewing documents.
- Qualitative data are narrative data collected using approaches such as interviews, questionnaires, focus groups, observations, or archival documents.
- The researcher is typically very involved with the participants during the research.
- The sampling type is usually purposeful, and the sample size is typically small.

Qualitative Research and the Inductive Process

- Qualitative research is based on inductive reasoning.
- Induction is a "bottom up" approach that moves from the research questions to narrative interview or questionnaire data or observations, to patterns and themes based on these data, to broad conclusions about those data, and can lead to a theory.

Strengths and Weakness of Qualitative Research

- Strengths:
  - Provides a wide variety of designs.
  - Flexibility in data collection approaches.
- Weaknesses:
  - Selecting an appropriate design can be a challenge for novice researchers.
  - Results cannot be generalized due to small samples and limited context.

Qualitative Research Designs

The qualitative method includes several designs. The following information provides a brief synopsis of many of the major qualitative designs. Detailed information about the implementation of each of these designs is provided in the Qualitative Design Selection and Alignment section.

- **Action research:** The researcher works collaboratively with an organization or institution to address a problem or create policy. There are various types of action research; each differs regarding the researcher's role and the objectives.
- **Appreciative inquiry:** Like action research, but rather than focusing on existing problems it focuses on building on the existing positive aspects of an organization and envisioning innovative enhancements for the future.
- **Case study:** The researcher examines an existing bounded "case" such as an organizational or institutional process using multiple sources of data to triangulate knowledge about the case. Case studies require an explicit "type."
- **Delphi technique:** Delphi research uses a panel of subject matter experts to examine consensus on topics such as best industry practices or the future of the topic under study. This technique is usually accomplished in two to three rounds.
- **Ethnography:** The researcher examines a culture to identify the cultural norms, social structures, and other patterns.
- **Grounded theory:** The researcher seeks to generate a new theory or a theoretical model that explains a process or action. The theory is "grounded" in data from these participants. This design implies that no theory currently exists.
- **Needs assessment:** This research is the first step for an institution or organization considering the development of a program or training. The research focuses on defining the program requirements or training competencies.
- **Phenomenology:** This research focuses on first-hand "lived experiences" of participants who have all experienced a common personal phenomenon. This design seeks to explore participants' internal dialog about the phenomenon.
- **Program assessment (or program evaluation):** The researcher evaluates an organizational or institutional program to measure the actual program outcomes against its intended outcomes.

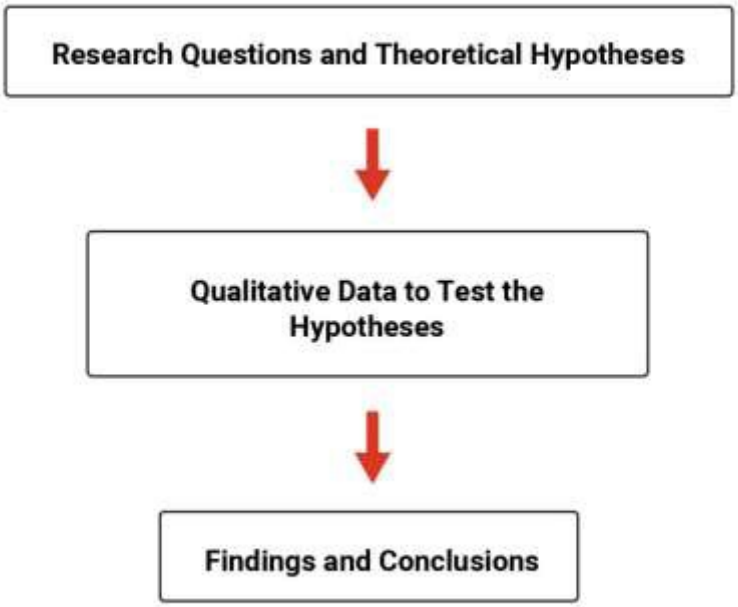
Quantitative Research

- Quantitative research is used to address a social problem by quantifying participants' opinions, perceptions, and feelings. This is not limited to what is quantifiable to humans as phenomena, instrumental measures (e.g., BP/pulse measures, weight loss/gain, expenses), retention rates and error rates are also quantifiable.
- Quantitative data are numerical data collected using approaches such as surveys or big data sets, which are statistically analyzed to test hypotheses.

- The researcher may not be directly involved with participants during the research. In a pretest/posttest design, the researcher could be active.
- The sampling type is usually random, and the sample size is typically large and based on the population size. There are times when a researcher may not use random sampling.

Quantitative Research and the Deductive Process

- Quantitative research is based on deductive reasoning.
- Deduction is a "top down" approach that transitions from general to specific by developing hypotheses and statistically testing the hypotheses with quantitative data to develop findings and conclusions.



Strengths and Weakness of Quantitative Research

- Strengths:
  - Tests and validates hypotheses.
  - Straight-forward data collection and analysis; easy to replicate.
  - The large sample size allows the results to be generalized to the population.
- Weaknesses:
  - Theoretical conceptualization of the study isolates variables, which limits the measurable impact of other intervening variables.
  - Measuring relationships between the variables does not determine cause-and-effect.

Quantitative Research Designs

The quantitative method includes several designs. The following list describes the most common quantitative designs used in doctoral research. Each of these designs is detailed in the Quantitative Design Selection and Alignment section.

- **Correlational research:** The researcher is interested in determining the relationship between two or more quantifiable variables. It is important to note that correlation does not determine cause-and-effect.
- **Experimental research:** The researcher randomly assigns participants to experimental and control groups and manipulates one or more variables to determine cause-and-effect.
- **Ex post facto (or causal-comparative):** The objective of this design is to identify causal relationships among variables that cannot be manipulated such as gender, ethnicity, or birth order. Causal research can be used to determine cause-and- effect between variables.
- **Factor analyses:** The researcher analyzes interrelationships within a set of variables or objects to construct a reduced set of variables, called factors, which contain the essential information in the original larger set of variables.
- **Q-methodology:** The researcher examines participant's views about a topic as the participants rank-order the Q sample. The Q sample is developed based on a literature review. The resulting Q sort is used to determine subjectivity.
- **Quasi-experimental research:** This design is similar to experimental research; however, whereas experimental research requires a treatment (manipulated variable), control, randomization, and able to be replicated, quasi-experimental is when any one or more of these characteristics of design is not possible.

Research Design Selection and Alignment

This section expands on the brief design descriptions above and defines implementation of the major qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-method designs that align well with the doctoral practitioner programs offered at University of Phoenix. The information is provided to assist in understanding differences between the various designs, to provide alignment information, and to provide examples of how to implement each research design.

Each research design section includes brief information on the research objectives of the design and includes external links for further information. Additionally, each section describes how to construct and align the dissertation problem statement, purpose statement, significance of the study, methodology section, and research questions with the design.

The designs listed are not fully inclusive; other designs may be acceptable, but please note that hybrid or "boutique" designs should be avoided. Once an appropriate design is selected it is imperative to become independently informed of how to correctly implement the design. Refer to the recommended references listed for each design for further information.

Qualitative Design Selection and Alignment

Action Research

The purpose of this section is to describe the implementation of action research. This design, which is often associated with education or healthcare research, allows the researcher to seek solutions to an organizational problem or a broader societal problem collaboratively with the members of the organization under study.

There are four different approaches to action research which are color coded throughout this document: Action research (AR), Participative research (PR), Participative action research (PAR), and Technical action research (TAR).

For the basic action research (AR) design the participants are usually limited to the management team; for PR the participants are those directly involved in the process; for PAR the participants are often intra-team representatives from throughout the organization. This section should also describe appropriate data collection and analysis. The researcher role within AR is to collaborate with organizational leadership to lead data collection based on available data and management interviews, analyze the current process, recommend specific changes, implement the changes, and evaluate the results.

Within participative research (PR) the role of the researcher is to develop understanding based on the tacit knowledge of the employees and managers. Data are collected via interviews and archival documentation, evaluated, and reduced to clear information such as process flows and communication flow diagrams. The researcher shares the information with the employees and managers to facilitate collaborative change recommendations.

Participative action research (PAR) requires the researcher and employees to collaboratively resolve a major organizational problem or address an organizational level decision; the results of PAR are designed to influence policy and practice. Examples of PAR include tiger teams or blue-ribbon panels in which participants who are impacted by the problem are brought together from across the organization to creatively address a systemic issue by planning and implementing the change. The researcher shares control of the process design with the employees.

Technical action research (TAR) is collaborative in that the researcher collaborates with the leadership or process owner, but the research typically does not include collaboration with other organizational

employees. In this approach the research objectives are developed by the organization or by an external facilitator rather than by the researcher. The researcher shares the information with the leadership; however, the primary objective is to create or test a theory and publish the findings such as within a doctoral dissertation. The discussion below describes how to implement each approach when developing the various sections of a dissertation.

Defining and implementing action research further describes the objective and implementation of action research.

Problem Statement:

Discuss what problem will be addressed by the research. Since action research is typically based on the needs of a single organization rather than a broad issue, it is acceptable to cite the organizational leadership as "personal communication" (see p. 179 of the APA manual). In contrast, participative action research (PAR) *may* be focused on a broader societal issue rather than an organization specific problem, and technical action research (TAR) focuses on a broad social science issue in order to develop or test a theory.

Purpose Statement:

The purpose statement should outline the method (qualitative) and design, such as action research, participative research, or participatory action research. Describe the research participants, your role in the research, and their role in the research. The purpose statement also should state the objectives, and the objectives must align with the design.

Action research (AR) focuses on improving organizational procedures from a process- oriented perspective; the goal is to collaborate with the leadership or process owner to improve a process from an advisor perspective before, during, and after the process change.

Participative research (PR) includes creation of knowledge based on the tacit knowledge of employees and managers involved in the process; the focus is inclusion of the participants. Implementation of a PR design requires researcher and employee commitment during the project to collaboratively address a problem. The researcher enables the participants to "solve their own problems" (Elden, Reason, & Rowan, 1981, p. 259).

Participative action research (PAR) requires the researcher and employees to collaboratively resolve a major organizational problem or address an organizational level decision; the results of PAR are designed to influence policy and practice. Examples of PAR include tiger teams or blue-ribbon panels in which participants who are impacted by the problem are brought together from across the organization to creatively address a systemic issue by planning and implementing the change. The researcher shares control of the process design with the employees.

Technical action research (TAR) focuses on a broad social science issue in order to develop or test a theory. Rather than primarily focusing on improving a process used by an organization, the principal intent of PAR is to add to the body of knowledge.

Significance of the Study

Describe how changing the process, addressing the problem, or influencing the organizational policy and practice might benefit the organization. For PAR the resultant change may have a larger societal impact or may be transferable to societal issues. For TAR studies the resultant recommendations should have a potential societal impact.

Research Methodology

All action research approaches are typically qualitative. Discuss use of the qualitative method and the specific action research design to be used.

Research Questions

As a qualitative study research questions must be included, but hypotheses should not be included.

Example research questions for Action Research (AR): Since AR includes assessment before, during, and after the process change, appropriate research question might include:

R1. What factors are contributing to the process issues?

R2. What changes can be implemented to create prospective process improvement? R3. What were the impacts of the implemented changes?

Example research questions for Participative Research (PR): Since PR is limited to the planning and implementation phase and collaborates with the employees and managers, appropriate research question might include:

R1. What are the process owners'/managers' perceptions of factors contributing to the process issues?

R2. What are the employees' perceptions of factors contributing to the process issues? R3. What changes can be implemented to create prospective process improvement while best meeting the needs of employees?

Example research questions for Participative Action Research (PAR): Since PAR is limited to the planning and implementation phase, and collaborates with the employees and managers to resolve a major organizational problem or address an organizational level decision and influence policy and practice, appropriate research question might include:

R1. What are the process owners'/managers' perceptions of factors contributing to the issue?

R2. What are the potential impacts to the organization issues?

R3. What are the potential benefits and challenges of each option for addressing the issue, and which option might produce the optimal results?

R4. What policy and practice changes must be implemented to facilitate the selected option, what is the expected outcome for the organization, and is the solution transferable to broader societal issues?

Example research questions for Technical Action Research (TAR): Since TAR usually relies on research objectives developed externally and focuses on a broad social science issue to develop or test a theory and add to the body of knowledge, appropriate research question might include:

R1. What are the stakeholder's research objectives or theory to be tested?

R2. How can these objectives be met, or how can this theory be tested within the participating organization?

R3. How might the results be used to improve the participating organization?

R4. How are the results transferable to the broader societal issue, and how do the results contribute to the body of knowledge?

Resources

Dissertation Guide Readings for Action Research

Appreciative Inquiry

Appreciative inquiry (AI) is a change management approach that is typically conducted in organizations. Therefore, this design is typically associated with the DM or DBA programs, but this design can be accomplished within other institutions such as healthcare or educational institutions. AI is an organizational improvement approach that focuses on the positive aspects of the organization rather than directly attempting to address and resolve existing problems. This design was originally developed and discussed in an article by Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987). AI can be used to improve current processes or organizations or to generate new ideas and recommendations for the organization under study.

Note that the positive approach of implementing the AI design for addressing organizational problems has an important benefit in gaining the organization's approval for conducting the research. Organizational stakeholders are more likely to allow researchers to conduct a study designed to *improve* a process or an organization than to examine an existing organization issue, such as using a case study approach to investigate a problem.

According to Kessler (2013), Cooperrider's "4D" AI model involves four phases. During the discovery phase the researcher collects participant's reflections and stories regarding the positive aspects of the organizational process under study. The second phase, dream, is a collaborative effort to imagine an idealized state. This step often involves development of a graphical representation. The third phase, design, involves realistic planning of the steps required to attain the vision created in phase two. The destiny phase focuses on developing a set of recommendations for practitioners and leaders based on the collection and analysis of employees', stakeholders', and the researcher's organizational process improvement insights.

The following links provide information and videos that introduce appreciative inquiry:

- Introduction to appreciative inquiry
- Cooperrider videos

Problem Statement

Discuss the organizational deficit to be addressed by the study. If the purpose is to generate new ideas and recommendations for the organization under study, then discuss the process or section that requires improvement. Since this application is typically based on the needs of a single organization rather than a broad issue it is acceptable to cite the organizational leadership as "personal communication" (see p. 179 of the APA manual). If the proposed improvements can be implemented across the industry, then discuss the industry-wide deficit as the problem.

Purpose Statement

The purpose statement should state that the method is qualitative, and the design is appreciative inquiry. The purpose statement also should state the objectives of the research such as to examine the current processes and recommend improvements. This section should also state the type of organization or institution, the program objectives, and participants or stakeholders involved in the current processes.

Significance of the Study

Describe the potential benefits of the proposed organizational change such as to create efficiencies, reduce operational costs, increase customer and/or employee satisfaction, or create improved organizational outcomes.

Proposed Research Methodology

The appreciative inquiry design is typically associated with the qualitative method but may be conducted as qualitative supported by quantitative data if quantitative data will also be collected and analyzed.

Research Questions

Example AI research questions might focus on the first three phases of the 4D model, such as:

R1. What are stakeholders' reflections and stories regarding the positive aspects of the current organizational process?

R2. What idealized future state do stakeholders envision?

R3. What steps are required to attain the vision?

Note that the fourth phase of the 4D model, destiny, will be discussed in chapter 5 of the dissertation. Therefore, it is not necessary to include an explicit research question to address this final phase.

Resources

Dissertation Guide Readings for Appreciative Inquiry

Case Study

A case study involves extensive exploration of a bounded case, which can be defined as a specific organization, situation, or process. The researcher must be able to clearly define and create limits around the subject to be studied (Merriam, 1998). As Merriam (1998) pointed out, "A case study design is employed to gain an in-depth understanding of the situation and meaning for those involved. The interest is in process rather than outcomes, in context rather than a specific variable, in discovery rather than confirmation" (p. 19).

Three of the most prominent case study methodologists are Robert Yin, Robert Stake, and Sharan Merriam. Researchers using the case study design should become familiar with and cite the work of all three authors. Yin Stake and Merriam case study differentiation discusses the various perspectives of the three theorists in designing and implementing a case study.

Case studies include two unique requirements—they must include a type and they must be supported by multiple sources of evidence. These two requirements are described below.

Multiple sources. The multiple sources requirement may be fulfilled using two or more of the six sources defined by Yin (2009):

- Documentation
- Archival records
- Interviews
- Direct observations
- Participant-observations
- Physical artifacts

It is important to keep in mind that the multiple sources of data must not only be collected; they must also be analyzed and triangulated to create the results in Chapter 4.

Case study sources of evidence by Yin provides additional information on sources of evidence.

Optionally, the multiple sources may be obtained using a stratified sample from two of more different populations of participants. For example, an educational research may involve perspectives from a sample of teachers, a sample of administrators, and a sample of parents. These data sources must be triangulated during data analysis phase to view the bounded case from various perspectives.

Single case studies, defined as a study of a single individual, are incapable of providing conclusions beyond the individual under study (Tellis, 1997). Note that a case study of a single individual is *not* considered a rigorous enough design for a dissertation.

Case study types. Yin (2009) defined the three most common types of case studies: explanatory, exploratory, and descriptive. Stake (1994) additionally defined three types: intrinsic, instrumental, and collective. These six types are briefly defined below.

Although these are the most commonly used types other types may be used.

Explanatory. An explanatory case study design is used to explain *why* a phenomenon occurs. In explanatory case studies, the focus is to explore phenomena in real-world settings (Yin, 2009).

***Exploratory*.** An exploratory case study is a technique used to collect more in- depth data about *what* is occurring. Exploratory case studies are used to explore phenomena where no defined outcomes are foreseeable (Yin, 2009).

***Descriptive*.** Descriptive case studies are based upon an already established theory. In descriptive case studies, a population is examined and data collected about that population, which is compared to a theory supporting the phenomenon being observed (Yin, 2009).

Intrinsic. Stake (1994) defined an intrinsic study as focused on examining a particular case because the case itself is of interest.

Instrumental. The goal of an instrumental case study is to provide insight into an issue or problem or to enhance an existing theory (Stake, 1994).

Collective. In a collective case study several cases are examined in order to understand a problem, phenomenon, or situation (Stake, 1994).

Review information on case studies and select a specific type of case study. See the following:

- Case study information – Tellis volume 1
- Case study design and Implementation - Baxter and Jack

Problem Statement

Discuss the existing issue within the bounded case to be addressed by the study. If the purpose is to generate new ideas and recommendations for the organization under study, then discuss the process or section that requires improvement. Since this application is typically based on the needs of a single organization rather than a broad issue it is acceptable to cite the organizational leadership as "personal communication" (see p. 179 of the APA manual). If the proposed improvements can be implemented across the industry, then discuss the industry-wide deficit as the problem.

Purpose Statement

In addition to stating that the method is qualitative, the purpose section of a case study must describe both the type of case study and the multiple sources of evidence to be used. The purpose statement also should state the objectives of the research such as to examine a specific situation within an organization or institution.

Significance of the Study

Describe the potential benefits of the proposed study such as to explore the situation in order to make recommendations for improvement.

Proposed Research Methodology

Case studies are typically associated with the qualitative method but may be conducted as qualitative supported by quantitative data if quantitative data will also be collected and analyzed.

Research Questions

The research questions should reflect the multiple sources of data. For example, when using a stratified sample and archival documents:

R1. What are school administrators' perceptions of the high absenteeism in high school?

R2. What are teachers' perceptions of the situation under study?

R3. What are parents' perceptions of the situation under study?

R4. Based on documentation, how has the situation changed during the 2018-2019 school year?

Resources

Dissertation Guide Readings for Case Study

Delphi Method Technique

The Delphi technique can be used to forecast a future state within the technology industry, to gain consensus on industry best practices, or to examine healthcare experts' opinion on health and disease trends. Therefore, design can be particularly useful for DM/IST, DM, or DHA research. This technique was developed in in 1950s by the RAND Corporation to forecast the impact of technology. See RAND corporation Delphi information.

Student should also review Nominal Group Technique (NGT) when contemplating Delphi to ensure alignment to the appropriate technique. NGT is best for working on best practices whereas most Delphi studies focus on forecasting future solutions.

A key element of this design is that it relies on a panel of subject matter experts. Although this design was originally created for face-to-face interaction between the panel members, current studies typically use a *modified* Delphi in which the expert panel are geographically dispersed and do not interact directly.

The researcher facilitates a two to three-round iterative process to collect and analyze the experts' opinions in order to converge on themes, generate statistical agreement data, and reach consensus. The first round involves open-ended questions submitted to the expert panel in order to create a sub-set of common threads, or themes. The second round typically requires the expert panel members to rate the themes on a Likert-type scale in order to identify their level of agreement. The third round, when utilized, is typically another narrative data collection. Delphi rounds discusses the use of the rounds of during data collection and analysis.

Problem Statement

Discuss the unknown nature of the topic under study. For example, the future technological state is not known, the trend of a healthcare issue is unknown, or best industry practices have not been identified. The unknown nature of the problem must be stated in literature and the problem must be cited.

Purpose Statement

The purpose statement should specifically state that the objective of the research is to obtain consensus based on industry experts. Example: The purpose of the proposed Delphi study will be to gain consensus from a national panel of healthcare experts on strategies to reduce the nursing shortage.

Significance of the Study

Describe the potential benefits of the proposed study such as to develop industry best practices based on expert consensus.

Proposed Research Methodology

Delphi studies are often associated with the qualitative method but since Round 2 involves a Likert-type scale data collection and analysis this design may be referred to as qualitative supported by quantitative data.

Research Questions

The research questions should mirror the purpose. For example:

R1. What are industry experts' best practices in organizational strategic planning?

R2. What is the level of consensus between industry experts' best practices in organizational planning?

Resources

Dissertation Guide Readings for Delphi Technique

Ethnography

Ethnography involves a systematic study of a culture. The study should reflect the knowledge and social meanings within a cultural group. Typically, this design is associated with sociology, but it may be used to study many issues associated with practitioner degrees such as to study an organizational or classroom culture or to research ethnic cultural norms that impact healthcare decisions. Data collection may entail interviewing participants to collect their cultural perceptions, examining the behavior and interactions between members of the culture, or examining artifacts and documents that convey the culture. Access conducting ethnography for an explanation of the characteristics of ethnographic research and how this design is conducted.

Note that autoethnography, a self-reflective sociological study that explores the researcher's personal experience and connects their autobiographical story to wider cultural and social meanings, is not appropriate for the practitioner programs offered at University of Phoenix.

Data collection may entail interviewing participants to collect their perceptions regarding their organizational culture, examining the interactions and behavior of the participants, or examining artifacts and documents that convey the organizational culture such as the mission and vision statements and espoused organizational values.

Purpose Statement

The purpose statement should specifically state that the objective of the research is to explore the problem from a cultural perspective.

Significance of the Study

Describe the potential benefits of the proposed study such as to improve the understanding of the culture and to provide recommendations that may improve the situation. For example, if the problem is that many African Americans are not obtaining needed mental health care due to a cultural stigma (Alvidrez, Snowden, & Kaiser, 2008), the Significance of the Study should convey that the study will result in recommendations to address and reduce the stigma.

Proposed Research Methodology

Ethnographic research is typically associated with the qualitative method.

Research Questions

The research questions should reflect a focus on culture. For example:

R1. What cultural norms result in many African Americans perceiving a stigma associated with mental health assistance?

R2. How are these cultural norms passed down through generations?

R3. How are these cultural norms changing within the generations, if at all?

Resources

Dissertation Guide Readings for Ethnography

Grounded Theory

The grounded theory design has a history of debate even among its germinal methodologists; however, this design can be a great option for topics in any practitioner program for which a theoretical basis is lacking. The objective of this design is to develop a theory regarding the topic under study. The theory must be *grounded* in data collected for the research. The following websites provides an overview of grounded theory: Overview of grounded theory

Grounded theory originated with Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss (1967). These theorists later diverged on their principles of this design and the design has evolved slightly based on follow on work by Kathy Charmaz. The following website provides a historical perspective of the design: Founding theorists' views of grounded theory

Data analysis of grounded theory data is usually conducted manually, using the constant comparative approach which consists of open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. The following website provides a simplified example of the analysis method based on three example research questions: Constant comparative coding

Although this design can be used for any practitioner program the following source focuses on the use of grounded theory in healthcare: DHA example of a grounded theory study

An important point to keep in mind is that the purpose of grounded theory is to create a theory, which may be presented as a visual model or as hypotheses to explain or define the phenomenon under study. This theory or model must be presented in the final chapter of the dissertation. Keep in mind that creating a theory or theoretical model is an excellent way to develop *publishable* contribution to the body of knowledge.

Purpose Statement

The purpose statement for grounded theory studies must include the objective of theory development.

Significance of the Study

Describe the potential benefits of contributing a new theory to the body of knowledge. For example, discuss why developing a model that explains the phenomenon might be beneficial, and to whom.

Proposed Research Methodology

Grounded theory research is typically associated with the qualitative method.

Research Questions

The final research question should focus on development of a theory or a theoretical model. For example:

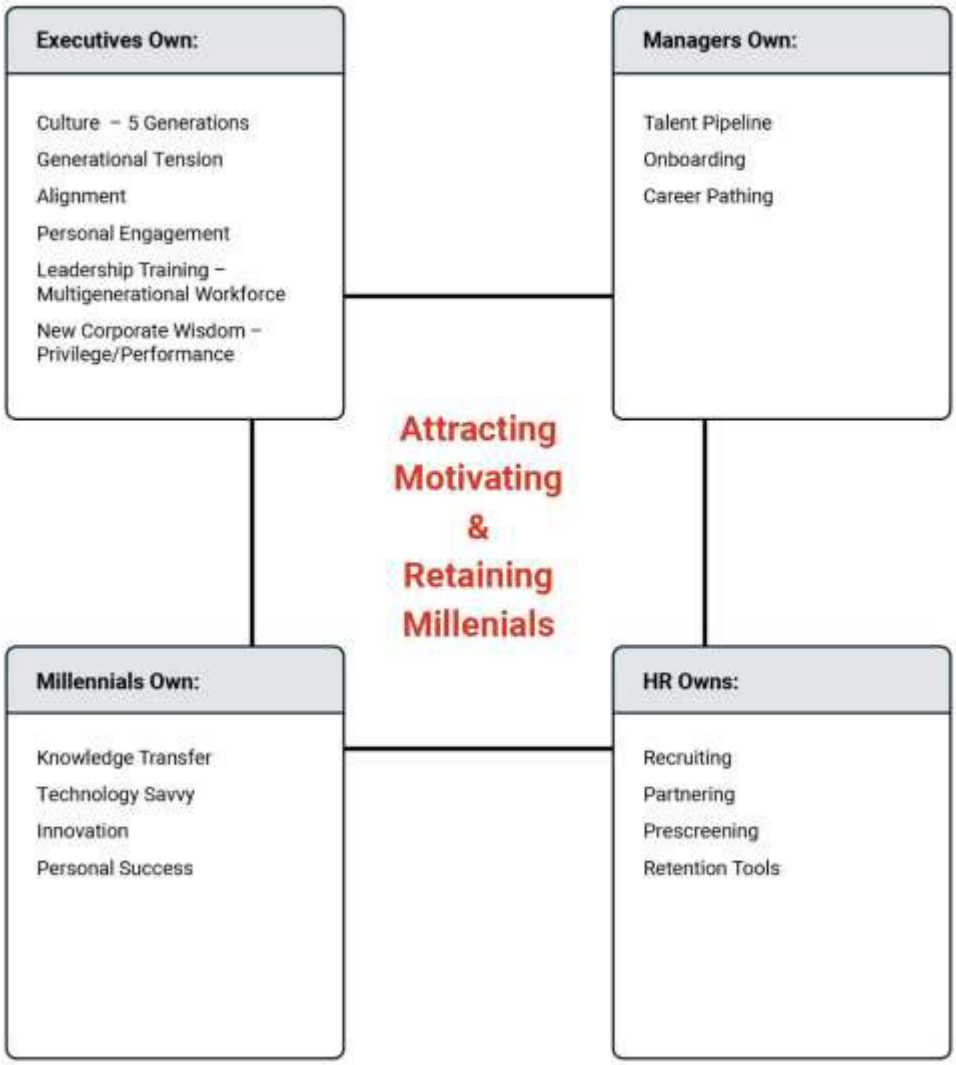
R1: How do organizational leader/managers lead and manage multigenerational workforce members differently?

R2: How has the organization transformed to attract, motivate, and retain Millennials?

R3: What grounded theory can be developed to improve recruitment, motivation, and retention of Millennials?

Example Resultant Theoretical Model

The following figure depicts an approach for developing the resultant theory. The theory may be stated in narrative or may be depicted as a figure, as shown below:



Adapted from Key stakeholders and factors influencing attracting, motivating and retaining Millennials (Carpenter & de Charon, 2017).

Carpenter, M. J., & de Charon, L. C. (2014). Mitigating multigenerational conflict and attracting, motivating, and retaining millennial employees by changing the organizational culture: A theoretical model. *Journal of Psychological Issues in Organizational Culture. 5*(3), 68-84. https://doi.org/10.1002/jpoc.21154

Note: Carpenter & de Charon article not available in University of Phoenix library.

Resources

Dissertation Guide Readings for Grounded Theory

Narrative Inquiry

Narrative inquiry emerged in the 20th century as a study of *experiences* as understood through the stories of the participants. The primary theorists associated with this design are D. Jean Clandinin and F. Michael Connelly (2000). When conducting this design, the researcher creates rich description of these experiences and explores shared meaning of the participants' experiences. According to Connelly and Clandinin (2006), and Haydon and van der Riet (2017), the exploratory structure for narrative inquiry should include:

- *Temporality* – the time of the experiences and how the experiences could influence the future;
- *Sociality* – cultural and personal influences of the experiences; and;
- *Spatiality* – the environmental surroundings during the experiences and their influence on the experiences

This design was originally rooted in the work of John Dewey (1938) and used in the field of education. In addition to participant interviews narrative inquiry may rely on data collected from archival sources such as autobiographies, journals, letters, and photos. Narrative inquiry - Clandinin provides an overview of this design, as described by one of the key theorists.

In addition to the education field narrative inquiry can be very applicable within healthcare as narrative stories are useful to convey the meanings of patients or healthcare staff in story form. Narrative inquiry in healthcare details using this design within the healthcare field.

Although this design may also be used within business related programs, narrative inquiry focuses on "personal and social context" (Wang & Geale, 2015, p. 196). Therefore, any DM, DM/IST, or DBA studies using this design should be limited to research of a personal nature such as experiences associated with employment issues. Process centered topics do not align with narrative inquiry.

Purpose Statement

The purpose statement for narrative inquiry studies must include the objective of examining participants' experiences as understood through their stories. The elements of temporality, sociality, and spatiality should be included in the stated study objectives.

Example: The purpose of the proposed narrative inquiry will be to understand the meaning that younger members of Native American tribes place on older tribal members' stories about higher education.

Significance of the Study

Describe potential benefits to the industry of examining the stories and experiences of the participants.

Proposed Research Methodology

Narrative inquiry research is typically associated with the qualitative method.

Research Questions

The research questions should focus on temporality, sociality, and spatiality. For example:

R1: What were the participants' feelings about the experience (name specific experience)? (temporality)

R2: What were the cultural factors and what were the interrelationships with other people involved in the situation (name specific situation)? (sociality)

R3: What was the physical environment during the experience and how did the environment impact the experience (name specific experience)? (spatiality)

Additional research question examples:

R1: What do college age Native Americans living on a reservation feel about leaving the reservation to attend college? (*temporality*)

R2: How do cultural factors and other people influence their feelings about leaving the reservation to attend college? (*sociality*)

R3: How do their current environment and the college environment impact their decision? (*spatiality*)

Resources

Dissertation Guide Readings for Narrative Inquiry

Needs Assessment

Needs assessment is used to identify deficits between the current organizational state and the desired state and provide recommendations regarding how to address the gap between the current and desired states. The objective of needs assessment research is to address a problematic situation or to enhance the organization by improving operations, programs, or the organizational structure. This design establishes priorities to address the situation and determine recommendations for solutions by addressing criteria for determining how to allocate resources such as people, funds, and facilities. Read more about needs assessment overview.

The needs assessment design is often associated with the fields of business and education, such as the DM, DM/IST, DBA, and EDD programs. However, this design can also be used for DHA program research. See the needs assessment healthcare example.

Purpose Statement

The purpose statement for needs assessment should include the objectives of assessing the organizational gap and recommending initiatives to address the deficit.

Significance of the Study

Describe potential benefits of implementing the recommendations. For example, describe the organizational advantages that may be created by identifying and addressing the needs.

Proposed Research Methodology

Needs assessment research is typically associated with the qualitative method but may include a quantitative component. Therefore, qualitative supported by quantitative data is also an option.

Research Questions

The research questions should focus on identifying the gap between the current and the desired organizational states and recommending resources or changes to address the deficit. For example:

R1. What is the desired situation within the organization?

R2. What is the current situation within the organization?

R3. What is the gap between the current and desired situations?

R4. What resources or organizational changes can address the gap?

Resources

Dissertation Guide Readings for Needs Assessment

Phenomenology

Phenomenology is based on the human consciousness works of philosophers Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger. This research design is associated with either the field of philosophy or psychology; therefore, it is typically not appropriate for studies conducted in the practitioner programs offered at University of Phoenix. However, there are a few topics, usually within the healthcare discipline, for which this design could be applicable.

Phenomenological study involves the description of *personal* feelings and conscious experiences of a phenomena such as "the death of a loved one, a counseling session, an illness, winning a championship football game, or experiencing a specific emotion such as guilt, anger, or jealousy" (Christensen, Johnson, & Turner, 2010, p. 368).

Phenomenological experiences that have been studied in psychology and related fields include obsessive-compulsive disorder, addiction, sexual abuse, and psychotic symptoms in narcolepsy. The researcher is attempting to gain access into the participants' inner world of the experience; the self-talk or "phenomenal space" (Christensen et al., 2010).

There are multiple types of phenomenological designs including transcendental, hermeneutic, and existential. Although phenomenology studies may include other types, *it is important to include a specific type within proposed phenomenological studies*.

A primary source for modern phenomenology is the work of Clark Moustakas. It is imperative to include this source in all proposed phenomenological studies. According to Moustakas (1994), phenomenological studies must include broad questions such as:

- What dimensions, incidents, and people intimately connected with the experience stand out for you?
- How did the experience affect you? What changes do you associate with the experience?
- How did the experience affect significant others in your life?
- What feelings were generated by the experience?
- What thoughts stood out for you?
- What bodily changes or states were you aware of at the time?
- Have you shared all that is significant with reference to the experience? (p. 116)

According to Moustakas (1994), in phenomenology *noema* defines how the participants experienced the phenomenon by touch, sight, or feeling, and *noesis* defines the participants' perceptions of their experience of the phenomena. Epoché and phenomenological reductions should be used during the interview process to identify the noema and noesis of each participant. Data analysis should be conducted using either the seven-step modified van Kaam process or the four-step Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen process (Moustakas, 1994). The following source introduces Moustakas' methodological theories: Moustakas phenomenology

Purpose Statement

The purpose statement for phenomenology should include the objective of understanding feelings and conscious experiences associated with a personal phenomenon. Example: The purpose of the proposed phenomenological study will be to gain the lived experiences of pediatric nurses who have had to tell parents their child was going to die.

Significance of the Study

Describe potential benefits of exploring the feelings and conscious experiences associated with a personal phenomenon.

Proposed Research Methodology

Phenomenology research is associated with the qualitative method.

Research Questions

The research questions synthesize the seven broad questions identified by Moustakas (1994). For example:

R1. What are the lived experiences of pediatric nurses who have had to tell parents their child was going to die?

R2. What internal conflicts do pediatric nurses describe in making the decision to tell parents their child was going to die?

Resources

Dissertation Guide Readings for Phenomenology

Program Assessment

Program assessment, also referred to as program evaluation, is often associated with educational programs and healthcare programs, but this design can be accomplished on various programs within diverse organizations and institutions. This design involves development and implementation of a systematic approach for collecting and analyzing data to determine the effectiveness of an existing program. Within the educational field program assessment is used to determine the effectiveness of a curriculum on intended student learning, and in healthcare and other fields the objective is typically to assess the outcome of the program against its intended results. Although the phases of program evaluation differ based on the discipline, basic steps of program assessments include:

- Engaging stakeholders
- Describing the program
- Creating the evaluation
- Collecting and analyzing data
- Developing conclusions
- Making recommendations

The following evaluation model is useful for evaluating an educational curriculum, beginning with comparing the current state to the desired state: Educational program assessment

The following healthcare model is useful for evaluating healthcare programs:

- Healthcare program assessment
- Using Program Assessment in the Healthcare Programs

Problem Statement

Discuss the need for the program assessment. This section should include a cited problem. Programs are typically assessed either during program development or immediately after the program has been initiated; therefore, the problem might focus on use of program funding with no mechanisms to measure the program outcomes. Since program assessment is typically based on the needs of a single organization rather than a broad issue, it is acceptable to cite the organizational leadership as “personal communication” (see p. 179 of the APA manual).

Purpose Statement

The purpose statement should state the method, which is typically qualitative. The design may be referred to as either program assessment or program evaluation. The purpose statement also should state the objectives of the assessment such as to evaluate the value of the program, to measure the actual outcomes of the program against its intended outcomes, to discover whether unintended consequences exist, and to recommend corrective measures or potential program modifications. This section should also state the type of organization or institution, the program objectives, and participants or stakeholders involved in evaluating the program.

Significance of the Study

Describe the potential benefits of identifying the value of the program, measuring or improving the program outcomes, possibly eliminating unintended consequences, and recommending potential program modifications might benefit the organization or institution. Scholarly Support and Theoretical Basis for Program Assessment Research provides support for the use of this design.

Proposed Research Methodology

Program assessment studies are typically qualitative and are often supported by quantitative data. It is possible to conduct a program assessment as a quantitative quasi-experiment or experiment (see

Program assessment methodology). This section should describe the researcher's role in the study and how the stakeholders will participate in the research.

Research Questions

For a qualitative study research questions must be included, but hypotheses should not be included. For quantitative quasi-experimental studies hypotheses should be included to compare the control and experiment groups.

Example qualitative research questions might include:

R1. Who are the program stakeholders and what are their roles in the program?

R2. What is the context and need for the program; what are the program activities and goals?

R3. What are the actual program outcomes relative to the intended outcomes?

R4. What conclusions can be made about the program effectiveness and what recommendations might potentially improve the program?

Resources

Dissertation Guide Readings for Program Assessment

Quantitative Research Design Selection and Alignment

Correlational Research

Correlational research is a non-experimental quantitative design, meaning that it does not involve manipulation of the situation or people. The objective of correlational research is to quantitatively measure and determine the relationship between two or more variables. Correlational research uses the terms predictor and criterion variables rather than independent and dependent variables. The measure (or behavior) being predicted is the criterion variable, and the measure (or behavior) from which the prediction is made is the predictor variable. The determined relationship between the variables does not imply a causal relationship between the variables; therefore, *it is important that the proposed study does not imply that the results will determine "cause" or "effect."*

Relationships or associations between variables is measured by statistics to identify the significance of the relationship or association. Statistical significance describes the meaning of significance in correlational research. Typically, the alpha should be set at .5 for social science research.

Correlational designs use various types of statistical analyses, based on the types of quantitative data collected to measure each variable. Once data types have been identified, the appropriate statistical tests can be determined. For more information on the various types of data and statistical tests, see data types and statistical tests.

Regression analysis may also be used for some studies to take the analysis further. Regression allows the researcher to graphically model the variables and is widely used for prediction and forecasting. Regression analysis provides further information on applying this type of analysis.

Problem Statement

Discuss the existing issue to be addressed by examining the relationships between the study variables.

Purpose Statement

The purpose should convey that the study will examine the relationship between the variables, not the cause or effects between the variables. The relationship should be a statistically "significant" relationship. The purpose section must specify the predictor and criterion variables to be examined and the sources of data to be analyzed, such as the instruments to be used to collect data.

Significance of the Study

Describe the potential benefits of identifying the relationship between the variables to be examined. Discuss who this information will benefit and why.

Proposed Research Methodology

The correlational design is quantitative.

Research Questions/Hypotheses

This design requires both research questions and hypotheses. Note that at least one research question is required and at least two sets of hypotheses should be included. The following is an example of such research questions/hypotheses.

R1: What is the relationship between emotional intelligence, as measured by the Emotional and Social Competence Inventory (ESCI), and satisfaction with co-workers, as measured by the Job Descriptive Index (JDI)?

$H1_0$: There is not a significant relationship between the Self-Awareness scale of the ECI and the co-worker satisfaction scale of the JDI.

$H1_A$: There is a significant relationship between the Self-Awareness scale of the ECI and the co-worker satisfaction scale of the JDI.

$H2_0$: There is not a significant relationship between the Social Awareness scale of the ECI and the co-worker satisfaction scale of the JDI.

$H2_A$: There is a significant relationship between the Social Awareness scale of the ECI and the co-worker satisfaction scale of the JDI.

$H3_0$: There is not a significant relationship between the Self-Management scale of the ECI and the co-worker satisfaction scale of the JDI.

$H3_A$: There is a significant relationship between the Self-Management scale of the ECI and the co-worker satisfaction scale of the JDI.

$H4_0$: There is not a significant relationship between the Relationship Management scale of the ECI and the co-worker satisfaction scale of the JDI.

$H4_A$: There is a significant relationship between the Relationship Management scale of the ECI and the co-worker satisfaction scale of the JDI.

Resources

Dissertation Guide Readings for Correlational

Experimental and Quasi-experimental Research

The objective of experimental and quasi-experimental research is to investigate cause-and-effect by utilizing a treatment or intervention for the experimental group and comparing the results to a control group who did not receive the treatment or intervention. For example, an educational or training program. The difference between experimental and quasi-experimental research is the assignment of the participants.

Whereas experimental research requires random participant and group selection, such as in a double-blind experimental drug study in which neither the researcher nor the participants know who is in the experimental or control group, quasi-experimental does not. Therefore, quasi-experimental research is much more common than experimental research within social science research such as the practitioner doctorates offered at University of Phoenix.

Experimental research describes several types of research used within true experimental research. Quasi-experimental research and types of quasi-experimental research focus on quasi-experiments.

Problem Statement

Discuss the existing issue to be addressed by examining the results of a treatment or intervention.

Purpose Statement

The purpose should convey the treatment or intervention to be introduced and state that the study will examine the effects/outcomes of the treatment or intervention. This section must also specify the type of design, such as a pretest-posttest or interrupted time series (see Types of quasi-experimental research).

Significance of the Study

Describe the potential benefits of identifying the effects of the treatment or intervention. Discuss who this information will benefit and why.

Proposed Research Methodology

Experimental and quasi-experimental designs are quantitative.

Research Questions/Hypotheses

This design requires both research questions and hypotheses. Note that at least one research question is required and at least two sets of hypotheses should be included. The following is an example of such research questions/hypotheses. In this pretest-posttest example the web-based tutoring program is the intervention. The dependent variable, math scores, is measured once before the intervention is implemented and again after it is implemented.

R1: What is the effect of a web-based tutoring program on the math scores of 3rd grade students?

$H1_0$: There is not a significant pretest difference in the math scores between the control group who did not participate in the web-based tutoring program and the experimental group who participated in the web-based tutoring program.

$H1_A$: There is a significant pretest difference in the math scores between the control group who did not participate in the web-based tutoring program and the experimental group who participated in the web-based tutoring program.

$H2_0$: There is not significant pretest-to-posttest difference in the math scores of the control group who did not participate in the web-based tutoring program.

$H2_A$: There is a significant pretest-to-posttest difference in the math scores of the control group who did not participate in the web-based tutoring program.

$H3_0$: There is not a significant pretest-to-posttest increase in the math scores of the experimental group who participated in the web-based tutoring program.

$H3_A$: There is a significant pretest-to-posttest increase in the math scores of the experimental group who participated in the web-based tutoring program.

Resources

Dissertation Guide Readings for Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Research

Ex Post Facto (Causal Comparative)

When it is not practical or ethical to engage human research participants, the ex post facto, also referred to as causal comparative, can provide an alternative design. Ex post facto simply means after the fact, meaning that data have already been collected over a period of time and must be worked with "as is." According to Vogt (2005), it is "any investigation using existing data rather than new data gathered specifically for the study" (p. 114). Review ex post facto videos for various videos on the ex post facto design.

The objective of this design is to investigate the cause and effect by examining differences between or within two or more groups on two or more variables using data that has already been collected (*secondary data*). A key a feature is that the independent variable cannot be manipulated. Researchers must establish the following conditions to justify a claim that changes in variable A *cause* changes in variable B:

- Condition 1: Variable A (the presumed causal or independent variable) and variable B (the presumed effect or dependent variable) must be associated or related. This is called the relationship condition.
- Condition 2: Changes in variable A must precede the changes in variable B. This is called the temporal order condition.
- Condition 3: No plausible alternative explanations exist for the relationship between variable A and variable B. This is called the no alternative explanation condition.

There are many secondary data sets in the public domain that provide opportunity to access large amounts of data, including longitudinal data. These data may contain an abundance of diverse variables allowing the researcher to explore various combinations of relationships to gain insights not previously studied. *Note that because these data have already been collected, obtaining permission to conduct the study is much simpler and quicker than required with most research, which typically requires recruiting participants and collecting primary data.*

Problem Statement

Discuss the existing issue to be addressed by examining the relationships between the study variables.

Purpose Statement

The purpose should convey that the study will examine the effects/outcomes using secondary (archival) data to determine causes of differences that already exist between or within two or more groups. This section must specify the independent and dependent variables to be examined and the archival source of the secondary data to be analyzed.

Significance of the Study

Describe the potential benefits of identifying the effects between the variables to be examined. Discuss who this information will benefit and why.

Proposed Research Methodology

The ex post facto or causal comparative design is quantitative.

Research Questions/Hypotheses

This design requires both research questions and hypotheses. Note that at least one research question is required and at least two sets of hypotheses should be included. The following is an example of such research questions/hypotheses. In this example the students' gender is the independent variable.

R1: What is the effect of using a web-based tutoring program on the math and grammar scores of 3rd grade boys and girls?

$H1_0$: There is not a significant difference in the academic growth in math scores between the boys and girls.

$H1_A$: There is a significant difference in the academic growth in math scores between the boys and girls.

$H2_0$: There is not a significant difference in the academic growth in grammar scores between the boys and girls.

$H2_A$: There is a significant difference in the academic growth in grammar scores between the boys and girls.

Resources

Dissertation Guide Readings for Ex Post Facto

Factor Analysis

Factor analysis is used to identify unobservable variables, defined as factors, based on observable variables. These factors represent underlying concepts that cannot be adequately measured by a single variable. The purpose of factor analysis is to uncover underlying factors that explain correlations among multiple outcomes, it is important that the variables studied be at least somewhat correlated.

This design relies on the assumption that underlying factors can explain a complex situation. Factor analysis is typically used to understand attitudes and behaviors. The design can be used in various fields to understand behaviors and is particularly useful for DBA students seeking to identify consumer attitudes. The following links provide further information on conducting factor analysis:

- History and definition of factor analysis
- Use of factor analysis
- Conducting factor analysis
- Factor analysis example

Problem Statement

Discuss the existing issue to be addressed by examining the underlying factors that impact the study variables.

Purpose Statement

The purpose should convey that the study will identify the factors that represent the concepts underlying the study variables.

Significance of the Study

Describe the potential benefits of identifying the relevant factors. Discuss who this information will benefit and why.

Proposed Research Methodology

Factor analysis is quantitative.

Research Questions/Hypotheses

This design does not require both research questions and hypotheses, but correlational hypotheses can be included to further the understanding of the variables. The following is an example of such research questions/hypotheses. *In this example a list of survey items is compiled to measure motives for online shopping, such as time convenience, place convenience, easy price comparison, large selection, access to customer reviews, ease of shopping, time savings. This list should be developed based on literature reviews. The survey should be used to collect Likert-type data to examine the importance of each survey item, then the factor analysis should be conducted to address R1. In addition, correlation can be conducted on consumer's demographic variables such age category and gender—see R2.*

R1: What factors influence consumer online shopping behavior?

R2: What is the relationship between age category, gender, and online shopping behavior?

$H1_0$: There is no significant difference in online shopping behavior based on age category (below 25 years, 26-40 years, above 40 years).

$H1_A$: There is a significant difference in online shopping behavior based on age category (below 25 years, 26-40 years, above 40 years).

$H2_0$: There is no significant difference in online shopping behavior based on gender.

$H2_A$: There is a significant difference in online shopping behavior based on gender.

Resources

Dissertation Guide Readings for Factor Analysis

Q-Methodology

The Q-methodology design is a systematic study of participant's subjectivity. In contrast to the factor analysis design, which involves finding correlations between variables across the participants, Q-methodology seeks correlation between participants across variables. The analysis reduces the individual viewpoints to represent the participants' shared perspectives.

This unconventional design was developed in the 1930s by William Stephenson. While some researchers argue that Q-methodology is quantitative (Rozalia, 2008) the subjective nature of the design has led others to argue that Q-methodology is mixed- method or qualitative supported by quantitative data (Angelopulo, 2009). Q-methodology was primarily used in psychology until 1970 but is currently used in disciplines including education and business research.

Q-methodology measures participants' perspectives of value, meaning, or significance regarding researcher developed statements, defined as a *Q-sort*. This set of statements is viewed as a dynamic medium through which subjectivity is expressed. The researcher typically develops 20 to 100 statements relevant to the research topic based on a review of the literature. The term *P-set* is used to describe the participants; a P-set of 40 to 60 participants is typically adequate for a Q-methodology study. The following links describe this design further:

- Q-methodology overview
- Conducting a Q-methodology

Data collection procedure is traditionally performed using a paper template and the developed statements printed on individual cards. However, there are also computer software and applications for conducting online Q sorts. The following is an example of the software specific to this design: Example Q-sort processing software

Problem Statement

Discuss the existing issue to be addressed by examining the common attitudes or perceptions between the participants.

Purpose Statement

The purpose should convey that the study will examine participants' shared perspectives.

Significance of the Study

Describe the potential benefits of identifying participants' shared perspectives. Discuss who this information will benefit and why.

Proposed Research Methodology

While some researchers argue that Q-methodology is quantitative the subjective nature of the design has led others to argue that Q-methodology is mixed-method or qualitative supported by quantitative data.

Research Questions/Hypotheses

This design requires research questions but does not require hypotheses. The following is an example of such research questions. In this example the study seeks to examine common attitudes across three income levels. The Q-sort should be developed to create 20 to 100 statements regarding consumer motives during food product purchase decisions.

R1. What product attributes (brand, price, convenience, and flavor) influence food product purchasing decisions for consumers with a household income of $40.000 or less?

R2. What product attributes (brand, price, convenience, and flavor) influence household product purchasing decisions for consumers with a household income of $40.001 to $80.000?

R3. What product attributes (brand, price, convenience, and flavor) influence household product purchasing decisions for consumers with a household income of $80.001 or more?

Resources

Dissertation Guide Readings for Q-Methodology

Mixed-Method Research and Alignment

Mixed-method studies are conducted when the researcher seeks to use quantitative and qualitative approaches in tandem with one another to strengthen the overall study or to accomplish something that the use of one method could not do standing alone. Mixed-methods research is appropriate for healthcare, education, and business research. Access the following resource for a comprehensive discussion of mixed-method: mixed-method.

The *type* of mixed-methods strategy a researcher uses is based upon four factors, which are:

- Theoretical perspective
- Priority of strategy
- Sequence of data collection implementation
- Point of data integration

Based upon these four factors, a researcher chooses the type of mixed-methods appropriate for designing and executing the research. Types include:

- Sequential Explanatory Strategy – sequentially uses quantitative method as the primary method and a qualitative method as the secondary method.
- Sequential Exploratory Strategy – sequentially uses *qualitative method as the primary method* and quantitative as the secondary method.
- Sequential Transformative Strategy – sequentially uses a primary method in the first phase of the research, then incorporates the secondary method in the second phase of the research. Whether a quantitative or qualitative method is employed in the first phase is dependent upon the theoretical lens that is being used. The transformative strategy builds on the first phase of the research for the secondary phase.
- Concurrent Triangulation Strategy – collects all data at the same time and then uses these data together to determine if these data points to the same or similar results.
- Concurrent Embedded/Nested Strategy – collects all data at the same time and then uses these data where one method is given priority and the secondary method is embedded/nested to test secondary research questions.
- Concurrent Transformative Strategy – shares perspectives with both the triangulation and embedded/nested strategies; however, it is guided by a theoretical or conceptual framework.

An inherent challenge for mixed methods is the need for the researcher to be skilled at designing and executing the study using both quantitative and qualitative methods. It is important to note that mixed-method is more than simply collecting and analyzing both quantitative and qualitative data. The triangulation of these data is key. These data must be *mixed* and analyzed to address the research questions and hypotheses. For research that involves both methods but these data are not mixed to answer the research questions, consider a specific qualitative design and use the term “qualitative supported by quantitative data”.

Problem Statement

Discuss the existing issue to be addressed by collecting and analyzing quantitative and qualitative data.

Purpose Statement

The purpose should convey the type of mixed-method study, based on the six types listed above. This section should describe how these data will be collected and mixed.

Significance of the Study

Describe the potential benefits of conducting the study. Discuss who this information will benefit and why.

Proposed Research Methodology

If one of the six types discussed above will be used, the study will be a mixed-method research. Otherwise, consider a specific qualitative design and use the term “qualitative supported by quantitative data”.

Research Questions/Hypotheses

This design requires research questions and hypotheses. The following is an example of such research questions/hypotheses. Using a Sequential Transformative Strategy, the quantitative method is used in the first phase of the research to address Research Question 1 and its associated hypotheses, then qualitative data are used in the second phase of the research to address Research Question 2.

R1: What is the relationship between use of the transformational and transactional leadership styles and employee performance?

$H1_0$: There is not a significant correlation between use of the transformational leadership style and employee performance.

$H1_A$: There is a significant correlation between use of the transformational leadership style and employee performance.

$H2_0$: There is not a significant correlation between use of the transactional leadership style and employee performance.

$H2_A$: There is a significant correlation between use of the transactional leadership style and employee performance.

R2: What leadership training might improve employee performance?

Resources

Dissertation Guide Readings for Mixed-Methods

Method and Design Selection Summary

Once an appropriate method and design have been selected be sure to locate and review references developed by the primary methodologists associated with that design. It is also crucial use an iterative process to ensure that the purpose and research questions align with the selected design. Reviewing for and revising to ensure alignment between each of the research elements is key part of the doctoral process!

Doctoral Phase 1: The Prospectus

The initial dissertation milestone, the prospectus, is a formal outline of the research project that outlines information to convey that the research can be completed and will provide meaningful results that contribute to the academic and practitioner communities. The prospectus should be iteratively updated until the end of Year 2 Residency when a Dissertation Chair will be assigned to assist with development of the proposal.

The prospectus will be used to convey the research intent and to select an appropriate Chair. The following elements must be included in the prospectus:

1. Program of Study (including specialization, when applicable)
2. Problem Statement
3. Purpose Statement
4. Methodology (Proposed Method and Design)
5. Research Population and Sample, and Other Data Sources
6. Significance of the Study
7. Research Questions/Hypotheses
8. Topic Literature
9. Topic Theories
10. Research Data Collection Strategy
11. Potential Dissertation Chair Information

The title of the prospectus should reflect the purpose and methodology of the study and should be considered a 'working title'. The outline that follows indicates the information needed in the prospectus. Following the form, additional information is provided regarding alignment of the prospectus elements. This information will assist in developing an organized and viable research outline.

Prospectus

Working Title of the Study
Student's Name

1. Program of Study (including specialization, when applicable)
For example, DM, DM/IST, DBA, DHA, EDD, EDD/ET, EDD/CI, EDD/HEA

2. Problem Statement
The problem should convey an existing issue and the statement should be supported by literature or cited using personal communication from an organizational leader. If you do not cite in Phase 1, you will need to cite your problem statement at Phase 2 with current (within the last five-years) literature or communication.

3. Purpose Statement
Provide a statement of the objectives of the study. Review the "purpose" section of the Research Design Selection and Alignment section of the Dissertation Guide and Alignment Handbook associated with the proposed design to ensure alignment.

4. Methodology (Proposed Method and Design)
After reviewing the Overview of Methods and Designs section and the Research Design Selection and Alignment section Dissertation Guide and Alignment Handbook, select a method and a design that are most appropriate for the proposed study. State the proposed method and design and briefly describe why these are appropriate to achieve the proposed objectives.

5. Research Population and Sample, and Other Data Sources
Describe the population by discussing the criteria for selecting the study participants, and describe the sample size, and the rationale for the sample size. If the study will include archival data briefly explain the proposed sources of data.

6. Significance of the Study
Provide a statement of the importance of conducting the study. Review the "significance of the study" section of the Research Design Selection and Alignment section Dissertation Guide and Alignment Handbook associated with the proposed design to ensure alignment.

7. Research Questions/Hypotheses
State the proposed research questions and hypotheses, when appropriate. Review the "research questions/hypotheses" section of the Research Design Selection and Alignment section Dissertation Guide and Alignment Handbook associated with the proposed design to ensure alignment.

8. Topic Literature
Provide a list of 5 to 10 topic literature peer-reviewed references in APA format that are relevant to the proposed study. Provide a discussion that includes 1 to 2 sentences for each reference to describe the relevance of the literature to the proposed study.

9. Topic Theories
Review research literature associated with the selected research topic(s) and state 1 to 3 relevant theories associated with the topics. This step will become the basis for the conceptual or theoretical framework, to be more fully developed in chapters 1 and 2 of the proposal in Phase 2.

10. Research Data Collection Strategy
Briefly describe the proposed process for collecting these data from the research sample and from any archival sources described in item 5, above.

Add an APA-formatted reference page to the end of the template.

Alignment of the Prospectus Elements

Each of the major elements of the prospectus must be aligned in order to plan a systematic and feasible study. Typically, the problem statement is viewed as the starting point for developing the prospectus. As mentioned previously the research problem should be presented as an existing social issue for which there is not a known solution or an effective solution. The problem *must* be supported with citations. The stated problem then drives the purpose, and the research method and design must align with thepurpose.

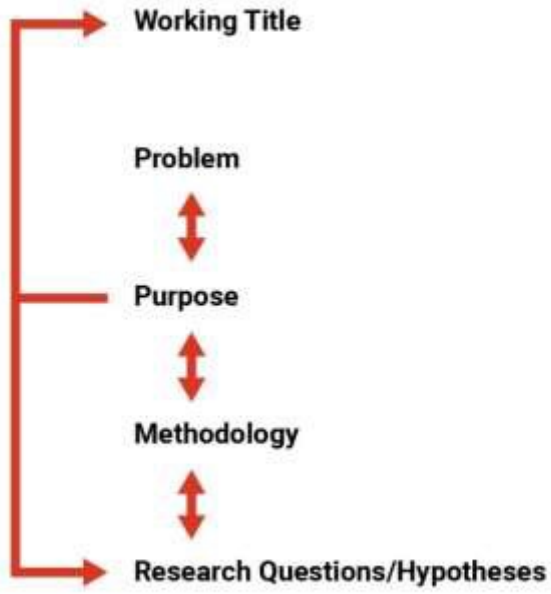
The alignment between the purpose and design should be an iterative process. Once an appropriate method and design are selected the purpose should be modified to reflect that specific design. The design sections of this document provide examples of appropriate purpose statements for various methods and designs.

The research questions should be developed based on the stated purpose of the study. Qualitative studies should either include a central research question and at least two sub-questions, or at least two research questions. In order to maintain a narrow research focus, which facilitates a more feasible study, it is recommended to limit the research questions to no more than four.

The key to alignment between the purpose and the research questions is to ensure that the research questions in aggregate are neither narrower nor wider than the purpose. The research questions must fully address the stated purpose and should not be broader than the stated purpose. Quantitative studies require only one research question but must include at least two sets of hypotheses. Mixed-method studies must include at least one qualitative research question and at least one quantitative research question supported by hypotheses.

The study title should reflect the purpose and the selected design. Note that the title may need to change later as the dissertation elements are further developed.

Therefore, during this phase the title can be considered a “working title”. The following figure depicts the elements of the prospectus that must be aligned.



Doctoral Phase 2 – Précis

During this phase the dissertation milestone is completion of the Précis, which is a draft of Chapter 1. Précis introduces the major elements of the dissertation including the topic, problem, purpose, research questions and any applicable hypotheses, and the significance of the study.

Note that the Research Design Selection and Alignment section of this document provides important information to assist with development of a problem statement, purpose statement, research questions and hypotheses, and significance of the study section to ensure alignment with the selected method and design.

The following depicts the various sections of the Précis, which is a draft of Chapter 1

The specific headings and order of the sections is not a requirement; however, the information must include a logical flow. The headings and section discussions demonstrate a systematic approach for developing the Précis or Chapter 1 of the dissertation. The chapter will be evaluated by Committee members based on the Dissertation Criteria Assessment.

Chapter 1

Introduction

(Note that "Introduction" is the chapter title)

No *introduction* heading before the first paragraph of the introductory text. The introduction serves to engage the reader by discussing the overall research topic and background information to your proposed study. A good introduction should describe the broad foundations of your study and indicate the general scope of your study but should not go into so much detail that later sections such as the purpose, problem, and methodology become irrelevant. The introduction can also provide an overview of the sections that will appear in Chapter 1.

Background of the Problem

This section should lead up to the statement of the problem in order to create the context of the problem for the readers. In this section, you will want to draw upon the origins of the issues from which the problem is based upon. Be sure to integrate appropriate references to evidence the existence of a problem. Your discussion should reflect why the research problem is of important social concern or theoretical interest. This section is typically several pages in length.

Problem Statement

This section must clearly identify the problem. Include the phrase "The problem is…" to allow the reader to distinguish the issue driving the study. The problem *must* be supported with citations. A researchable problem is not simply a gap in the literature or a lack of information; a research problem is a documented *existing social issue* for which there is not a known solution or an effective solution. Review the CDS Dissertation Guide *Problem Statement* section associated

with your selected design to ensure that this section *aligns* with your design. This section is typically brief at less than one page in length.

Purpose of the Study

This section should concisely explain the focus of your study. Begin this section with the method and design you have selected and provide a clear statement of the research objectives of your study. Provide a brief description of the means through which the goals of your study will be achieved and the geographic location of the study. When conducting a case study, which requires multiple sources of data, ensure that those sources are identified. For quantitative or mixed method designs include the study variables and instruments to be used to collect the data. Review the *Purpose Statement* section associated with your selected design to ensure that this section *aligns* with your design. This section is typically brief at less than one page in length.

Population and Sample

Describe the population by discussing the criteria that you will use for your study participants. Also, briefly discuss your sampling type and sample size. If your study will not include participants or primary data, then briefly explain your proposed sources of data.

Significance of the Study

The significance sections explain why the study is a unique approach to the problem to be investigated, potential benefit/benefactors from the proposed study, and the ways in which the study results might make an original contribution to the field. Discuss why this study important and to whom. Describe the potential contribution this research may make to current and future studies and thought and how the results of this research might add to leadership knowledge and literature. Review the CDS Dissertation Guide "*Significance of the Study*" section associated

with your selected design to ensure that this section *aligns* with your design. This section is typically brief at less than one page in length.

Nature of the Study

This section should include a description of the general means through which the goals of the study will be achieved. In this section, you will present a synopsis and justification of the *research method and design* for your study. Provide an overview discussion of the research method (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed) and the appropriateness of the method for addressing the purpose of the study. Additionally, discuss why your proposal research design is more appropriate than two or three other possible research designs. For studies with a specific type, such as a case study, also support the selected type. Also provide a brief overview of the proposed instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis. This section is typically 1 to 3 pages in length.

Research Questions/Hypotheses

(*Only include "hypotheses" in the heading if applicable*)

In this section you will state your research questions and sub-questions, if appropriate. Please number the questions such as R1, R2, and so forth. Qualitative studies require at least two research questions and typically include about four. For quantitative studies include at least two sets of hypotheses. Review the CDS Dissertation Guide *Research Questions/Hypotheses* section associated with your selected design for specific information.

Theoretical or Conceptual Framework

(*One or the other—delete either theoretical or conceptual from the heading*)

The framework should place the study in perspective among existing theories or conceptual models and provide a framework related to the research topic. The discussion should

reflect the broad theoretical area under which the research falls and reflect familiarity with germinal and current theories in the field. Remember that a theoretical framework is typically used for a quantitative study to model the theoretical relationships between the variables; a conceptual framework is typically used for a qualitative study and consists of several theories that underpin the topic. The framework should only introduce readers to the relevant theories; this discussion will be expanded in Chapter 2.

Definition of Terms

This section is only required if any operational terms or words are used in a unique way in this study. Any definitions must be supported with citations.

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

State any assumptions that you will be using as a basis for your study. Limitations are issues that the researcher cannot control. In contrast, delimitations define how you are choosing to control or scope your research. Also mention generalizability of the study findings. Note that qualitative studies are not generalizable to the population.

Chapter Summary

The discussion should summarize key points presented in Chapter 1. Information should be presented in a discussion context. Supporting citations should be provided for key points. The chapter summary should end with a transition to next chapter such as “Chapter 2 will...” or “In Chapter 2…”.

Doctoral Phase 3 – Dissertation Chapter 2: Literature Review

In DOC/723 students expand their work from second-year residency by applying critical analysis to develop a focused literature review. The focus of this course includes evaluating the relevance of research studies related to the selected research topics, synthesizing historical and current sources of literature, and expanding on the theoretical or conceptual framework from Chapter 1. The literature review also requires methodological/design literature relevant to the selected research topic. The literature review should provide a synthesis (not a study-by-study summary) of the state of current knowledge on the topic.

The following depicts the various sections of Chapter 2. The specific headings and order of the sections is not a requirement; however, the information must include a logical flow. The headings and section discussions demonstrate a systematic approach for developing Chapter 2 of the dissertation. The chapter will be evaluated by Committee members based on the Dissertation Criteria Assessment.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Begin with an introduction with no section heading. Remind the reader of the study topics and the foundational theories that drove the review of the literature.

Title Searches and Documentation

Describe the approach that you used to search for relevant documentation including key words used to search for publications. You can opt to include a table in this section to describe the numbers of journals, books, or other sources used for your various topics.

Historical Content

Generally, historical content is defined as over 5 years old. Include subsections for each of the various topics related to your study. The topic subsections should be presented in order from the broadest topic to the narrowest topic. Include both germinal content and content that is considered historical based on its publication date. It is crucial that you do not develop your literature review as merely a series of annotated bibliographies that discuss one source after another. It is crucial to synthesize the sources by comparing and contrasting the various perspectives on each topic. Include subheadings to delineate between various historical content topics.

Current Content

Generally, current content is less than 5 years old. Include the same subsections that you used in the historical content unless there is no current literature for a specific topic. Here again it is important to synthesize the sources—compare and contrast the various perspectives on each topic. It is important to describe all perspectives of each research topic including any controversial literature rather than presenting only literature that supports your own perspective

in order to create credibility. Include subheadings to delineate between various current content topics.

Theoretical or Conceptual Framework Literature

(*One or the other; must reflect the type of framework used in Chapter 1*)

The framework in Chapter 1 should only have introduced readers to the relevant theories. This section should include subsections for each of the relevant theories and discuss supporting germinal and current literature on those theories.

Methodology Literature

Describe the various studies that have been accomplished within your topic area. Focus on the methodologies that have been used in research and on the findings of those studies. Key objectives are to address what has already been accomplished in previous research and to support that your methodology will add to the body of knowledge.

Research Design Literature

In Chapter 1 you briefly described your selected research design. This section should expand on that discussion and include support from several design methodologists including the germinal methodologists associated with the design.

Conclusions

It is important to recognize that this section is not the chapter “conclusion”; it is “conclusions”, meaning what did you conclude from the literature? Focus on what you derived from the literature you reviewed and remember to cite each assertion.

Chapter Summary

The discussion should summarize key points presented in Chapter 2. Information should be presented in a discussion context. Supporting citations should be provided for key points. The

chapter summary should end with a transition to next chapter such as “Chapter 3 will...” or “In Chapter 3...”.

Please note that Chapter 2 should be expanded to 30 to 50 pages prior to submitting the complete proposal for review.

Doctoral Phase 4 – QRM: Proposal

The dissertation proposal consists of chapters 1 through 3. The development of chapters 1 and 2 is discussed in the previous sections of this document; therefore, this section focuses on the development of Chapter 3. Note that the format and flow of Chapter 3 will depend on the selected method and design.

The following is a general structure for Chapter 3. Review dissertations conducted with your selected design to identify any specific information needed for your Chapter 3. For example, a Delphi technique study will require a discussion of data collection and data analysis strategies for each of the proposed rounds. The chapter will be evaluated by Committee members based on the Dissertation Criteria Assessment.

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

No heading for the introduction. Remind the reader of the purpose and objectives of the study. Introduce the contents of the chapter.

Research Method and Design Appropriateness

Expand on the Chapter 1 discussion by supporting selection of the research method and design. Provide a detailed overview discussion of the research method (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed) and the appropriateness of the method for addressing the purpose of the study. Additionally, include a detailed description of why your proposal research design is more appropriate than two or three other possible research designs within the selected method.

Research Questions/Hypotheses

This section should reiterate the research questions and any hypotheses introduced in Chapter 1.

Population and Sample

Discuss the population for the proposed study, defined as the pool of potential participants for the study. If the study will include a stratified sample discuss the various population groups to be included. Follow the population discussion with a description of the sample size and *how the sample size was established*. For stratified samples discuss the sample size to be obtained from each population group. For studies that will not include primary data use an alternate heading such as “Data Sources” and discuss the proposed sources of the study data, such as archival data. Ensure that you collect demographic data from the participants, including any data relevant to the study topic such as organizational position and experience in years, to include in Chapter 4.

Informed Consent and Confidentiality

Discuss how you will obtain informed consent from any participants and describe any signed permissions already obtained including Permissions to Use Premises, Permission to Use Data, Permission to Use Survey, and so forth. Describe how any confidential data will be stored and later destroyed. Refer to appendices such as the Informed Consent Form; for example, “See Appendix A for the Informed Consent Form”.

Instrumentation

Describe any instrumentation to be used to collect primary data such as qualitative questionnaires, interview protocols, or surveys. It is important to include a table to indicate how the instrumentation items, defined as interview questions or survey questions, align to the research questions or hypotheses. Refer to appendices such as the instrumentation.

Field Test or Pilot Study

Qualitative studies require a field test on original narrative data collection instruments. Note that field tests must be conducted prior to proposal approval; therefore, the field test and its results must be described here in Chapter 3. Original quantitative instruments require use of a pilot study to produce validity and reliability data; however, pilot studies cannot be conducted prior to proposal and IRB approval. Therefore, the plan to use a pilot study should be described in Chapter 3, and the results should be discussed in Chapter 4. Mixed-method studies may require both a field test and a pilot test.

Credibility and Transferability or Validity and Reliability

For qualitative studies, include a section on credibility and transferability or trustworthiness to discuss how these attributes will be accomplished within the study. Include any relevant discussion regarding how the various sources will be triangulated. For quantitative

studies, include a section on validity and reliability. Quantitative instruments that are commercially produced or have been published should have validity and reliability data available. Original quantitative instruments will require use of a pilot study following IRB approval to produce validity and reliability data. Mixed-method studies often require discussion of both credibility and transferability, and validity and reliability.

Data Collection

This section must include a complete description of the processes to be used to collect any primary or secondary data. Include discussion of how any participants will be recruited for participation and describe any permissions required to collect these data. If data will be collected in phases, such as during a Delphi study with two or more rounds, a case study with multiple sources of data, a study with a stratified sample, a quantitative study with more than one survey instrument, or a mixed-method study, describe each phase of data collection process clearly.

Data Analysis

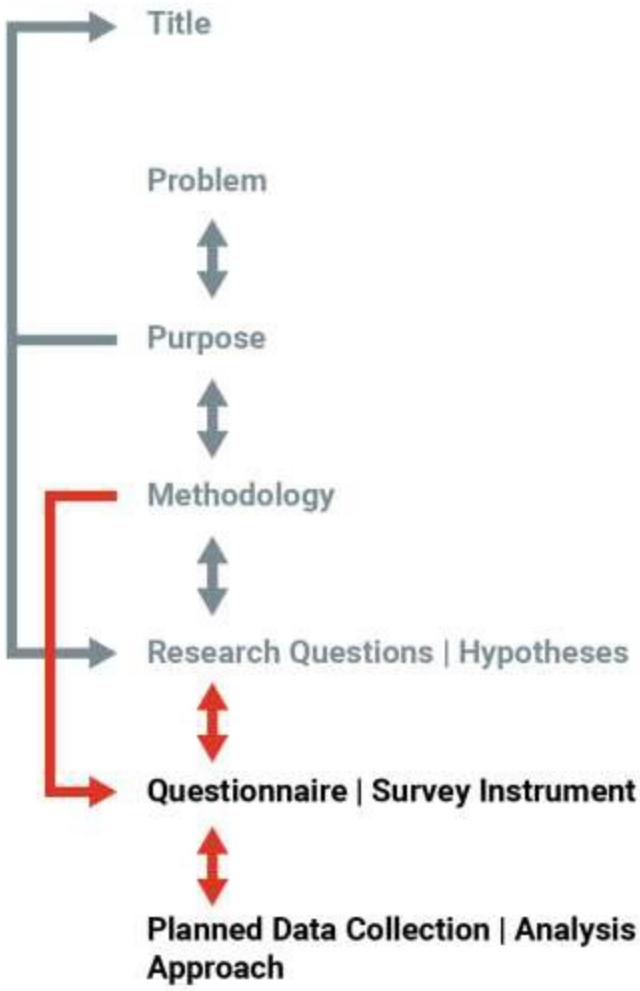
Data analysis section must include a detailed description of the processes or statistical techniques to be used for analysis of any primary or secondary data. Proposed data analyses techniques must clear and appropriate to the research design and a sufficient level of detail must be provided. Qualitative analysis steps must be described and must align with the selected design, such as the constant comparative approach for a grounded theory study and a modified van Kaam process or Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen process for phenomenology. When applicable, quantitative data analysis discussion must include information on the statistical tests to be performed, Alpha levels for hypotheses testing, and whether the testing will be one-tailed or two-tailed.

Chapter Summary

The discussion should summarize key points presented in Chapter 3. Information should be presented in a discussion context. Supporting citations should be provided for key points. Although Chapter 4 is not submitted as part of the proposal the chapter summary should end with a transition to next chapter such as “Chapter 4 will...” or “In Chapter 4...”.

Alignment of the Proposal Elements

The proposal is a crucial approval milestone in the dissertation process since the approved proposal is considered an agreement between the researcher and the university. The dissertation proposal consists of chapters 1, 2, and 3. Again, each of the major elements must be aligned in order to propose a clear and researchable study. The figure below depicts the alignment requirements during this phase. The additional elements from the prospectus phase, the bottom two in the figure, are data collection instrument and data collection and analysis strategies.



For a qualitative study the research questions should guide the instrument, which is typically a questionnaire or a set of interview questions. Additionally, the questionnaire or interview questions must align with the methodology. As stated previously the design sections of this document provides examples of research questions relevant to various research designs. Understanding and reflecting the intended focus of the selected design and developing research questions that are well aligned to the design should also result in alignment between the methodology and the instrument.

A good approach for developing aligned questionnaire/interview questions is to consider each research question individually and create questionnaire/interview questions that will address only that research question. Ideally the questionnaire/interview questions should total around 12 questions. For example, to address two research questions consider six questionnaire/interview questions per research question. To address four research questions, create three questionnaire/interview questions per research question. Note that the qualitative instrument will also need to be field tested as described in the proposal chapter 3 discussion.

Achieving alignment between a quantitative instrument, referred to as a survey, and the associated hypotheses depends on whether the instrument is an *existing* survey or the instrument will be an *original* survey developed as part of the research. Use of an existing survey is usually a good approach since the instrument should already have reliability and validity data established. In contrast, an original survey will require a pilot study following IRB approval. The chapter 3 discussion describes these requirements in detail. For an existing survey identify any specific measurement scales associated with the instrument and consider aligning the hypotheses with each of the scales. Mixed method studies must include an instrument, or a combination of instruments, designed to capture both qualitative and quantitative data needed to address the research questions and hypotheses.

Once data collection instrument(s) are created or selected, data collection and data analysis strategies must be developed. Note that some research designs are associated with specific data collection and analysis approaches, so ensure familiarity with the requirements of the selected design. For example, grounded theory studies are associated with the constant comparative method of data analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), the Delphi technique is typically conducted in three rounds of data collection and analysis, and phenomenology is often associated with either the modified Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen or the modified van Kaam data analysis approach **(**Moustakas, 1994). The study title should also be finalized during the proposal phase.

Proposal Assessment Rubric

Review the current Dissertation Criteria Assessment (DCA) on CDS Central.

Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Following the academic approval of the proposal, the proposal must be submitted to the University of Phoenix Institutional Review Board (IRB). IRB maintains a Human Research Protection Program to protect the rights and welfare of those persons who volunteer to participate in the research activities of our faculty, students, and staff. While the definitive responsibility for the ethical treatment of all human participants rests with the individual researcher who has secured the privilege to conduct research through the University of Phoenix, the IRB acts as a regulatory oversight group committed to promote the ethical and responsible treatment of volunteer human participants in a research study through performing ethical reviews of research studies, to ensure research compliance with all federal, state, and local regulations as well as all institutional policies and procedures in addition to offering education and guidance related to human subject research for the University community. Chairs are listed as c0-researchers on the IRB application.

The University of Phoenix IRB is guided by The Belmont Report and the focus upon respect for persons, beneficence, and justice. The University holds Federal Wide Assurance filed with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (FWA: 00004202). Students should register for the University of Phoenix IRB at IRBNet.org and access the forms and templates within the IRBNet library. Please read the READ ME FIRST document under forms.

Doctoral Phase 5 – QRF: Dissertation Chapters 4 & 5: Dissertation

Once the research has been conducted the final two chapters, Chapters 4 and 5, can be developed. Chapter 4 focuses on data analysis and results, and Chapter 5 describes the conclusions and recommendations that the researcher has developed based on the study results and existing literature.

Regarding formatting of the final dissertation, when transitioning the proposal chapters to the final dissertation ensure that all description of the sample correctly reflect the actual sample size rather than the proposed sample size and ensure that the entire document, including Chapters 1, 2, and 3, are written in past tense. Do a search on “propos” to locate any use of the term *proposal* or *proposed* and eliminate this term throughout the document to reflect a completed study. Prior to submitting the document for review, complete the abstract and complete or delete the dedication and acknowledgement pages. As an appendix include a blank version of the *Informed Consent Form*, only, and remove all other IRB documents and research site and participant identifiers.

The following is a general structure for Chapters 4 and 5. Again, review dissertations conducted with your selected design to identify any specific information needed for your Chapter 4. The completed dissertation will be evaluated by Committee members based on the Dissertation Criteria Assessment.

Chapter 4

Analysis and Results

No heading for the introduction. Remind the reader of the purpose and objectives of the study. Introduce the contents of the chapter. Keep in mind that Chapter 4 should solely describe the analysis process and the study results; therefore, *no citations should be included in this chapter*.

Research Questions/Hypotheses

This section should reiterate the research questions and any hypotheses. Ensure consistency in the wording with previous chapters.

Data Collection

Provide a detailed discussion of the informed consent and data collection process used. Additionally, if the actual data collection process differs from the proposed process as described in Chapters 1 and 3 revise those chapters to reflect the actual process used. Note that if data collection is performed in multiple phases, such as in a Delphi technique or a mixed-method study, Chapter 4 should include subsections for each of these data collection and data analysis phases.

Demographics

Describe the study participants by stating information such as gender, age range, ethnicity, region, occupation, years of experience, or other relevant demographics. To avoid confidentiality issues, collect and report age in ranges such as 20 to 30, 30 to 40, and so forth. Include the demographic information as text, tables, or a combination or text and tables. However, report the demographics individually without linking the demographic data together or to a participant. For example, the reader should *not* be able to determine that Participant 1 was an

Asian female teacher in her 30s who lives in the North West region since this information may compromise confidentiality. For studies that did not include primary data use an alternate heading such as “Data Sources” and discuss the sources of the study data.

Pilot Study

(*Include this section only for original quantitative instruments*)

Original quantitative instruments require use of a pilot study to produce validity and reliability data. For any research that included a pilot study report the results in this section.

Data Analysis

Data analysis section must include a *detailed* description of the processes or statistical techniques used for analysis of any primary or secondary data. If the actual data analysis process was altered from the proposed process revise Chapters 1 and 3 to reflect the procedures actually used. The description of data analysis steps should include a level of detail that would allow a competent researcher to reproduce your analysis.

For narrative data analyze these data individually for each research question rather than for each interview or questionnaire question. Similar to data collection, if the analysis is performed in multiple phases, such as in a Delphi technique or a mixed-method study, Chapter 4 should include subsections for each of these data analysis phases.

Results

Effective reporting of the results is extremely important. For qualitative narrative data the results are typically reported as themes. Each theme should be reported in a separate sub-section and should be numbered such as Theme 1, Theme 2, and so forth. Typically, the number of major themes for a qualitative study are three to eight. Consider that each theme will need to be

compared and contrasted against existing literature in Chapter 5, so exceeding eight themes is not recommended.

Themes should be phrases or short complete sentences that reflect the objective of the study. For example, a theme of “Communication” is too vague to be effective, whereas “Insufficient communication from administration” or “Insufficient communication from administration was a barrier to effective teaching strategies” conveys a much clearer context. Each theme must be supported by example narrative, such as three to five examples of brief participant quotes. Identify the participants using their code, for example “P3 stated ‘If we could only get clear direction from the principal it would make our jobs so much easier’”.

For quantitative data, include the analysis tables and describe the results of the analysis. Include a sub-section for each research question and reiterate the associated hypotheses. Discuss the meaning of the results in terms of supporting or not supporting the null hypotheses, and clearly describe the meaning ascribed to those results.

Regardless of the research method, include any outlier data. Do not compare the results to literature in Chapter 4; save this information for Chapter 5.

Chapter Summary

The discussion should summarize the chapter and *reiterate the results* presented in Chapter 4. The chapter summary should end with a transition to Chapter 5.

Chapter 5

Conclusions and Recommendations

No heading for the introduction. Remind the reader of the purpose and objectives of the study. Introduce the contents of the chapter.

Research Questions/Hypotheses

This section should reiterate the research questions and any hypotheses. Ensure consistency in the wording with previous chapters.

Discussion of Findings

The objective of this section is to compare and contrast the study results to existing literature. For qualitative and mixed-method studies with resultant themes, this section must include sub-sections for each theme. For quantitative and mixed-method studies with hypotheses, this section must include sub-sections for the results of each set of hypotheses. *Compare or contrast each result to three to five published sources.* Note once you have established the study results you may need to slightly expand the Chapter 2 literature review to include relevant information or information that has been recently published.

Limitations

In contrast to the limitations discussed in Chapter 1, the Chapter 5 limitations section should focus solely on unforeseen limitations that were revealed while conducting the study. Remember that limitations are out of the control of the researcher.

Recommendations to Leaders and Practitioners

Keep in mind that the entire study culminates in this section so consider this discussion carefully. Based on the research questions and the results, convey how leaders and practitioners

might mitigate the *problem* underlying the study. Consider including a recommendation for each of the results.

Be very specific in the recommendations and consider ending the section with a table to reiterate the recommendations for each of the results. Additionally, ensure that the recommendations align with the research design. For grounded theory studies include a theory or a theoretical model, and for action research clearly describe the recommended actions for leaders and practitioners to pursue. Whenever appropriate include a model in this section. Remember that the goal of a practitioner doctorate is to improve your field of practice, which is accomplished through your recommendations.

Recommendations for Future Research

When completing this section consider how you might have accomplished the study differently. Also consider what you have uncovered that might be further explored through additional research. Include three or four specific recommendations for further study and include recommended methodologies.

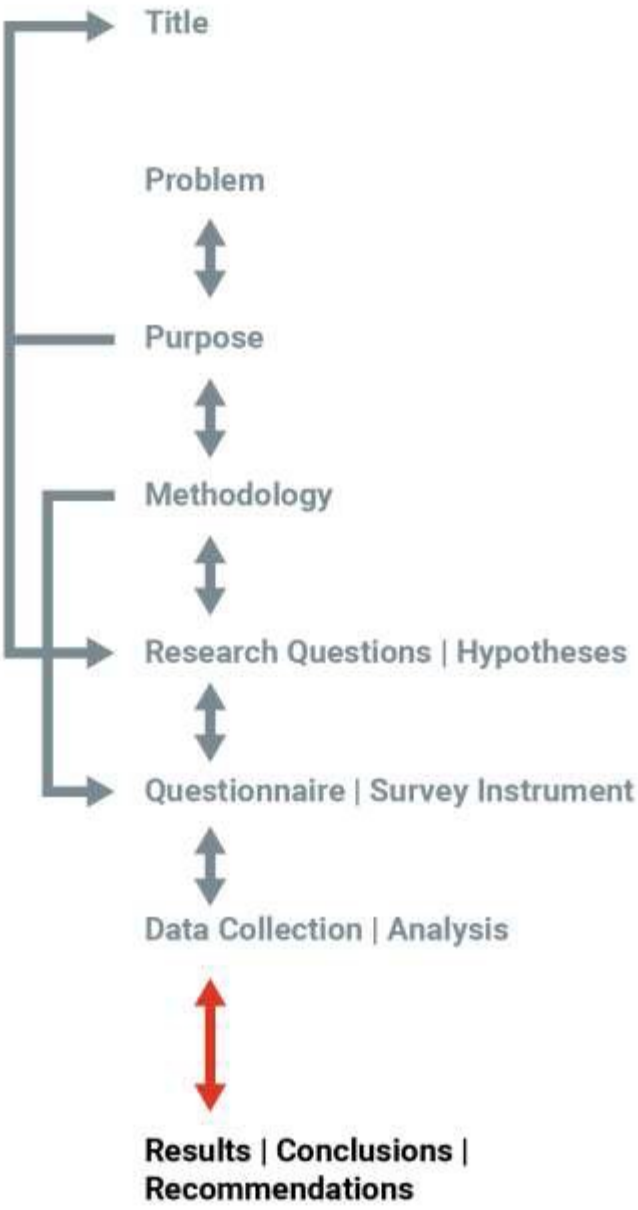
Chapter Summary

Summarize only Chapter 5 rather than the entire dissertation. Reiterate each of the study objectives or research questions and state the study findings. End with a strong cogent statement that conveys what the study has contributed to the body of knowledge.

A researcher reflection section can also be included in Chapter 5, and this section can be written in first-person language.

Alignment of the Dissertation Elements

The full dissertation is an important milestone marking the completion of the study. The dissertation typically consists of five chapters reflecting the study results and recommendations. Each of the major elements must be aligned in order to reflect a methodical study leading to aligned conclusions and recommendations. The figure below depicts the alignment requirements during this phase. The additional elements from the proposal phase, that at the bottom of the figure, are the results and the conclusions/recommendations.



The analysis and results of the study should be described in Chapter 4 of the dissertation. The dissertation milestone section of this document discusses the requirements for developing this chapter. Chapter 4 must reflect alignment between the analysis steps, as proposed in Chapter 3, and the results of the analysis. The stated results must be a clear and direct outcome of data analysis performed.

The conclusions and recommendations of the research should be described in Chapter 5 of the dissertation. The criteria for these sections are detailed in the dissertation Doctoral Phase 5 section. The conclusions must align with the results. Therefore, the stated conclusions should be limited to conclusions and implications drawn directly from the results. *An important part of the study conclusions is to demonstrate alignment between the results and existing literature.* This is accomplished by comparing and contrasting the study results to literature reviewed in Chapter 2. The recommendations should include recommendations to leaders, practitioners, and recommendations for future research, and the recommendations should align with the conclusions.

Dissertation Assessment Rubric

Review the current Dissertation Criteria Assessment (DCA) on CDS Central.

Oral Defense

The oral defense is a tradition in doctoral academia. The defense must be presented to all three committee members and typically includes a presentation format such as PowerPoint. The number of slides should be limited to about 20 slides. The following topics should be included:

- Introduction/Problem Statement
- Purpose Statement/Method and Design/Population & Sample
- Research Questions/Hypotheses
- Theoretical/Conceptual Framework & Literature Review Synopsis
- Instrumentation & Data Collection Approach
- Data Analysis Approach
- Findings (Note that the emphasis of the slides and presentation should focus on the study findings, for example, for a qualitative study include 1 or 2 resultant themes per slide)
- Recommendations for Leadership (This is also a key area for the oral defense)
- Conclusion
- References

Following the presentation all three committee members will ask questions designed to demonstrate the student's knowledge of the subject matter, the appropriateness of the study as conducted, and the alignment between the purpose of the study and the findings. The committee questions and defense should also focus on the study's contribution to the body of knowledge and on the student's future plans for publishing, presenting, or otherwise disseminating the results of the study.

Final Dissertation Editing

The final approval step in the dissertation is final dissertation editing (FDE). The student is responsible for ensuring that the dissertation meets the APA and final editing guidelines. The committee members, especially the Panel Validator (PV), provide APA review for the dissertation final dissertation format. The information below provides guidance on APA requirements for dissertations. Additionally, this section includes a Dissertation Format Requirements document and an FDE checklist.

The following are basic formatting points regarding use of APA:

- The preferred font is 12-point Times New Roman.
- The margins should be 1-inch top, bottom, and right side—the right margin should be ragged, but the left margin should be 1.5 inches to allow a binding margin for bound hardcopies.
- All text within the paper is double-spaced, including quotations and the reference page.

The APA 7th edition requires specific formatting techniques. The page number in the APA 7th edition is included for reference and further detail.

Structure of a Dissertation

Title Page

The title page should follow the College of Doctoral Studies Dissertation Format Requirements.

Headings

Headings convey a hierarchical structure, similar to the levels of an outline. Refer to pages 47-49 of the APA manual 7th edition.

References

The reference page should list *all* in-text citations. For instance, if there are five different citations within the text there must be five references listed on the reference page.

Other reference tips:

- Watch reference indentations–the first line is flush left with remaining lines of reference indented five spaces or 0.5 inch. This is called “hanging indentation.”
- The entire list of references should be double spaced with no extra space between references. For example:

References

Elkind, D. (1978). *The child's reality: Three developmental themes*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Issac, G. (1995). Is solar disorder timed? *Adolescents*, *30*(118), 273-276.

- No author, reference citation
  - Book, no author or editor, pages 264, 289, and 306 of the APA manual 7th edition
  - Anonymous works, pages 264, 289, and 306 of the APA manual 7th edition
- Electronically retrieved material, pages 298-300 of the APA manual 7th edition
- Same author, same year of publication, pages 267 and 305 of the APA manual 7th edition
- Same author, different year of publication, pages 305 of the APA manual 7th edition
- Personal communications, page 260 of the APA manual 7th edition

Refer to page 303 of the APA manual 7th edition for specifics regarding how to arrange reference listings and pages 58-59 of the APA manual 7th edition regarding how the finished reference page should appear.

Elements in an APA Paper

Properly cited sources add to the researcher's credibility. Various citation forms are used when quoting an author's exact words. Following are explanations and examples of different types of quotations used in APA.

Quotations

To properly cite a quotation, you *must* provide the page number(s). With some sources, you will also need to include the chapter, figure, table, or equation. Refer to page 270-278 of the APA manual 7th edition. When citing electronic sources that do not provide page numbers, use either the paragraph symbol or the abbreviation *para*. Refer to page 273 of the APA manual 7th edition.

Short Quotations

Short quotations consist of fewer than 40 words and are incorporated into the text and enclosed by quotation marks. If a quotation ends the sentence, the punctuation goes outside the final parenthesis. If the quotation occurs mid-sentence, then end the passage with quotation marks, cite the source in parentheses immediately after the quotation marks, and continue the sentence. Refer to page 271 of the APA manual 7th edition.

Short Quotation Examples:
Published Sources

She stated, "The 'placebo effect' . . . disappeared when behaviors were studied in this manner" (Miele, 1993, p. 276), but she did not clarify which behaviors were studied. [Note the citation immediately follows the quotation and is outside the quotation marks. If it ended the sentence the final period would be placed after the closing parenthesis for the citation.]

Electronic Sources

As Myers (2000, para. 5) aptly phrased it, "positive emotions are both an end—better to live fulfilled, with joy [and other positive emotions]—and a means to a more caring and healthy society." [Note the period after para. And that the period at the end of the quote is inside the quotation marks.]

Block Quotations

For a *block quotation*, which contains 40 or more words, insert the final punctuation mark, and then cite the source in parentheses. Do not use quotation marks. Refer to pages 272-273 of the APA manual 7th edition.

Block Quotation Examples Published Sources
Miele (1993) found the following:

> The "placebo effect," which had been verified in previous studies, disappeared when behaviors were studied in this manner. Furthermore, the behaviors were never exhibited again [italics added], even when reel [sic] drugs were administered. Earlier studies (e.g., Abdullah, 1984; Fox, 1979) were clearly premature in attributing the results to a placebo effect. (p. 276)

[Note the period is before the page citation and the entire quote including the page number is indented 0.5 inch.]

Plagiarism

Following are a few clues associated with plagiarism:

- A paper exceeds the writer's research or writing capabilities, sounds professional or journalistic, or is too scholarly.
- The paper contains complex or specialized vocabulary, jargon, technical terms, or other words and expressions beyond what would be expected from a student at that level.
- The quality of writing is inconsistent. For example, the introduction or conclusion may be poorly written compared to the body of the paper. (Detecting Plagiarism, 2002, para. 1)

Emphasizing Words

Italicize key terms or technical terms and labels for emphasis. Do not put the terms in quotations marks. Refer to page 170 of the APA manual 7th edition.

Example:

- Correct: He is politically correct.
- Incorrect: He is "politically correct."

Seriation and Lists

When using a series of elements within a sentence or paragraph, use lowercase letters in parentheses. Refer to pages 189-191 of the APA manual 7th edition.

Example:

The marketing director's three choices were (a) advertising on the Internet, (b) using direct mail marketing pieces, and (c) placing a magazine advertisement. [*Note: a common error is to not use the comma before the and at the end of the series. A related error is some students use a comma before and even in simple compound sentences*.]

Ellipsis or Spaced Periods

When omitting material from the original source, use three spaced periods (ellipsis points) within a sentence, and use four points between two sentences. The ellipsis includes spaces between periods (. . .). Refer to page 275 of the APA manual 7th edition.

Itemized Conclusions

Use Arabic numerals rather than bullets for itemizing conclusions or procedural steps. Refer to page 190 of the APA manual 7th edition.

Common Knowledge

Common knowledge—a commonly known fact, such as Washington, D.C., is the capital of the U.S.—does not need a citation even if you had to look up those data. Often-used quotations may qualify for this rule as well. Other assertions of information presented as facts need a reference substantiating them.

Tables versus Figures

Generally, tables are used to display exact values (numbers) and figures are used to display graphics, such as pictures, drawings, and bar graphs. Both tables and figures are more commonly used in dissertations than in other types of formal written assignments.

Example - Proper Label for a Table

Type the table number, place in bold font; then, double-space, and type a description of the table *in italic title case*. Refer to APA 7th edition, page 199. Please note that the title for a table always goes *above* the table and is not incorporated in the table.

Example - Proper Label for a Figure

Figures are numbered sequentially in Arabic numerals as they appear in the document. “The figure number (e.g., Figure 1) appears above the figure in bold. The figure title appears one double-spaced line below the figure number in italic title case” (APA, 2020, p. 225). Refer to APA 7th edition, pages 225-226.

Example - Copyrighted Sources of Tables and Figures

Reproduced or adapted figures and tables must have written permission and be given credit within the document. Refer to APA 7th edition, pages 387-391, for information about obtaining permission to use copyrighted figures and tables.

Other Table and Figure Tips

- Tables and figures should be placed as near as possible to their description in the text.
- Tables and figures should be numbered separately. For example: Table 1, Table 2, Table 3, and start over numbering for Figure 1. Refer to APA 7th edition, pages 200 and 227.
- If the figure or table has been reproduced or adapted from a copyrighted source, the learner must obtain permission to use it. Refer to APA 7th edition, pages 387-391.
- Exceptions to obtaining permission to use copyrighted material include works created by the U.S. Government that are expressly prohibited from copyright protection by the 1976 copyright statute, sec 105. Noncopyrightable material is called *public domain material*.

Reference

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). Author.

College of Doctoral Studies Dissertation Format Requirements

Organization

- Dissertations at University of Phoenix are organized into three sections: the frontmatter, the main text, and back matter.
  - Front or Preliminary Matter: Title page, Signature page, Abstract, Acknowledgements, Dedication, Table of Contents, List of Tables, List of Figures, and so forth
  - Main text: chapters with titles, headings, introductions, and so forth
  - Back Matter: references, appendices, optional note, and optional author biography

Style guide

- APA Style
  - Margins: A margin is the space in which no text appears. All materials and pages within the dissertations must meet the margin requirements. Based on ProQuest requirements, the materials must follow these guidelines:
    - Front Matter: 3 inches at the top for the Title and Signature pages, 1 inch at the top for other front matter, 1 inch at the bottom, 1.5 inches on the left, and 1 inch on the right
    - Body of document: 1 inch at the top, 1 inch at the bottom, 1.5 inches on the left, and 1 inch on the right
  - Use 12-point font for the body of the document; figures should be large enough to read easily—between 8-point and 12-point font with sans serif typeface—and convey only essential information. See additional information for tables and figures under the main text requirements.
  - Line spacing: All text must be double-spaced. Paragraphs must have the right margin of text ragged. Single line spacing may be used *within* tables or figures.
  - Refer to the Microsoft website tutorials, Format text and Change margins, for help formatting your Microsoft Word document. Additional Microsoft Word tutorials are available on the Word help & learning page.

Contents and order of all dissertations

- Title Page
- Signature Page
- Abstract
- Dedication (optional)
- Acknowledgements: optional
- Table of Contents
- List of Tables, if used
- List of Figures, if used
- Main text
- Back Matter
  - References: APA style and spacing
  - Appendices: APA style and spacing

Front matter requirements

Title page

This is the first page of the text in the dissertation. Follow these instructions to create a title page.

1. Type the title in all capital letters centered between the left and right margins. If a title is more than one line, double-space between lines. The title should be no more than 15 words in length and should not contain abbreviations or words that serve no purpose. Your title may take up to two lines. The title should do the following:
    a. Avoid bold type or symbols, formulas, superscripts, subscripts, or other non-alphabetical symbols, to comply with UMI/ProQuest publishing requirements.
    b. Use italics only as required by APA Style.
    c. Accurately reflect the content and scope of the dissertation.
    d. Use proper punctuation.
        i. Double-space from the title to a new line, centering between the margins and type "by" in lowercase.
        ii. Double-space to a new line, then type your full legal name as it appears in your official University of Phoenix records.
        iii. Double-space to a new line, then type the copyright notice and date. The copyright notice should appear "Copyright 2021".
        iv. Add five single-spaced lines after the copyright. On the sixth line, type the following as appropriate to your degree type, using line breaks, single line spacing, and text casing:

            A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment
            of the Requirements for the Degree
            Doctor of _____

        v. Fill in the correct degree in the blank.
        vi. Add five single-spaced lines after the degree. On the sixth line, type University of Phoenix.

Signature page

1. Type the following text centered between the left and right margins:

    The Dissertation Committee for Jane Doe certifies approval
    of the following dissertation:

    a. Add three single-spaced lines. On the fourth line, type the title in all capital letters centered between the left and right margins.
    b. Add three single-spaced lines. On the fourth line, type "Committee:" at the left margin.
    c. Add one spaced line. On the second line, type the Chair's name, a comma, one space, then degree, comma, one space, then Chair (not Chairperson, Chairman, or mentor) centered between the left and right margins.
    d. If you have two Chairs, type Co-Chair rather than Chair on the first and second lines, respectively.
    e. Add one spaced line. On the second line, add the names of each additional committee member.
    f. Add five single-spaced lines. On the sixth line, type the Chair's name. Do not include the word Chair or degree type after the name.
    g. Add two single-spaced lines. On the third line, add the names of each additional committee member.
    h. Add two single-spaced lines. On the third line, type the following:

Hinrich Eylers, PhD
Vice Provost, College of Doctoral Studies
University of Phoenix

    i. Add two single-spaced lines. On the third line, type "Date Approved:".

Abstract

To follow APA guidelines regarding an abstract, limit your abstract to no more than 250 words. The first line of the abstract is not indented. An abstract is “a brief, comprehensive summary of the contents of the paper” (APA, 2020, p. 38).

Dedication

This section provides an optional space to dedicate the dissertation work to individuals who may be family, or to a special contributor, or a program or institution, or a special set of beliefs based on intellectual or spiritual perspectives. It reflects a special reference to what any of these mean to you as a person in completing the dissertation work and receiving the doctoral degree.

Acknowledgements

This section provides an optional space to recognize those who have helped you along the doctoral journey to this successful end point. It can include anyone who has contributed instrumentally to the dissertation effort and typically will include the dissertation chair and committee, as well as any others that assisted in the effort.

Table of Contents

See the sample dissertation.

List of Tables

List of tables is used for more than one table.

List of Figures

List of figures is used for more than one figure.

Pagination of front matter

All front matter pages are numbered with lowercase Roman numerals (i, ii, iii, iv, etc.) centered 0.5 inch above the bottom of the page. The page number should be omitted from the title and signature pages and begin on the abstract page with iii.

All section headings from the approval page through the preface should be centered between the margins of the page, in all capital letters, beginning on the first line after the 1-inch top margin.

Main text requirements

Chapters:

- Type Chapter 1 centered at the top of the page. Then double-space and type the title of the chapter. Please note, the title of the chapter is not bold font. Traditionally, Chapters 1-3 represent the proposal of the dissertation. Traditionally, completed dissertations include at least two chapters following the elements of the proposal.
- Chapter 1 serves as an overview of the dissertation and proposal.
- Chapter 2 is a review of the literature.
- Chapter 3 is a detailed description of the methodology and methods being used in the dissertation and proposal.
- Chapter 4 reviews the actual conduct of the study, detailing the work completed by the student, including data collection and analysis processes and initial findings.
- Chapters 5 detail the outcomes, findings, and conclusions from the dissertation. Depending on the nature and complexity of the findings, more than five chapters are acceptable.

Pagination

- Avoid placing a lone heading on the last line of the page or a single line of text on the top of the next page.
- All main text and back matter pages are numbered consecutively with Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, 4, etc.) centered 0.5 inch above the bottom of the page. The first page of the main text begins with 1.

Headings and subheadings

- Follow APA style requirements. Level 1-5 headings should be used in each chapter after typing the chapter title. Refer to the APA Manual, 7th edition, pages 47-49.

Citations

- Refer to the APA Tutorials in the Doctoral Writing Resource center and refer to the APA Manual and the APA Style Blog for current citation information (https://blog.apastyle.org/apastyle/).
- Paragraphing and indentation: Indent each paragraph five spaces, or 0.5 inch. If you are using Microsoft® Word, use the Tab key, which is programmed to indent paragraphs at the 0.5-inch mark.

Notes, tables, figures, and graphics

- Refer to the APA Example Formats for Tables and Figures document in CDS Central for how to format tables, notes, figures, and graphics into your dissertation.
- In addition, refer to the APA Style Blog for current information regarding tables and figures formatting.
- When using these tools, the dissertation author must ensure that all tables, notes, figures, and graphics follow APA requirements.

Back matter requirements

References

- Refer to the APA Tutorials in the Doctoral Writing Resource center and refer to the APA Manual and the APA Style Blog for current reference information.

Appendices

- Each appendix should appear on its own page. A single appendix should be labeled as Appendix in uppercase and lowercase words. If the dissertation has more than one appendix, label each in the following order based on how the information appears in the body of your dissertation: Appendix A, Appendix B, Appendix C, and so forth. The name of the appendix must be centered at the top of the page and followed by a title, which should explain in no more than 12 words what that appendix is. Confidential information must not be included in the appendices.
- As an appendix include a blank version of the *Informed Consent Form*, only, and remove all other IRB documents and research site and participant identifiers.

Table of Contents

Final Dissertation Editing (FDE) Checklist

This checklist describes APA formatting and dissertation formatting requirements unique to the College of Doctoral Studies. There should be no errors in the document prior to final submission for publication.

A. Text

☐ 1. Times Roman 12-point font used
☐ 2. Document double-spaced throughout
☐ 3. Margins at 1 inch on top, bottom, and right sides, 1.5 inches on left and ragged right edge
☐ 4. Paragraphs indented five spaces (0.5 inch)
☐ 5. Headings and subheadings properly formatted
☐ 6. No end-of-line hyphenation
☐ 7. Only one space after punctuation
☐ 8. No bold type used for emphasis; italics used instead

B. Frontmatter

☐ 1. Title page conforms to University of Phoenix requirements
☐ 2. Order of manuscript pages conforms to University of Phoenix requirements
☐ 3. Abstract included and properly formatted – single paragraph with no paragraph indentation
☐ 4. Table of contents accurate and properly formatted with five space or 0.5-inch indentations
☐ 5. List of tables and list of figures included only for two or more tables or figures

C. Content Pages

☐ 1. No "orphaned" or standalone headings at the bottom of a page; page break used to avoid standalone headings
☐ 2. Page numbers correctly formatted; centered at bottom of pages and sequenced – small Roman numerals on front pages and Arabic on body pages
☐ 3. Each chapter begins with chapter number and title centered at top in plain text, not bold
☐ 4. Sections of text follow one another without break
☐ 5. Headings properly formatted following APA Style

D. Quotations

☐ 1. Quotations with fewer than 40 words incorporated into text and enclosed with quotation marks
☐ 2. Quotations of 40 or more words properly indented in block format

E. Tables and Figures

☐ 1. Numbered separately, sequentially, and properly labeled
☐ 2. Written permission obtained, and referenced if necessary
☐ 3. Tables and figures are mentioned in the text before they are shown
☐ 4. Placed as near as possible to their descriptions in the text

F. Back Matter

☐ 1. Order of pages conforms to requirements
☐ 2. Pages properly formatted and numbered
☐ 3. Reference list and each appendix begin on a new page
☐ 4. Hanging indent is used for each reference in Reference List

G. In Text Citations
☐ 1. All outside ideas properly cited
☐ 2. Citations complete and properly formatted; use of “and” and ampersand are correct
☐ 3. Electronic sources properly cited
☐ 4. Personal communications cited in text only, not in the reference list
☐ 5. Page numbers included for direct quotations
☐ 6. Indirect or secondary sources properly cited

H. Reference List Citations
☐ 1. References in correct alphabetical order of the last name of the authors with author’s initials
☐ 2. Electronic references properly cited and formatted
☐ 3. Format of references conforms to University of Phoenix and APA requirements
☐ 4. In-text and reference list citations correspond

Appendix A: Dissertation Template

The template below demonstrates the required formatting and order of full dissertation material. Note that the section headings should be modified as appropriate for the selected research methodology. Ensure that your page numbers meet the requirements stated above; small Roman numerals on the frontmatter and Arabic numerals on body of the document, starting Chapter 1 as page 1.

For convenience, download the APA Doctoral Dissertation Template (current version) from CDS Central.

Table of Contents

SAMPLE DISSERTATION TITLE:

STATE THE STUDY METHODOLOGY

by

Jane Doe

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of [Name your program]

University of Phoenix

The Dissertation Committee for Jane Doe certifies approval of the following dissertation:

SAMPLE DISSERTATION TITLE:

STATE THE STUDY METHODOLOGY

Committee:

John Smith, EdD, Chair

Julie Jones, PhD, University Research Methodologist

James Johnson, EdD, Panel Validator

_____
John Smith

_____
Julie Jones

_____
James Johnson

_____
Hinrich Eylers, PhD
Vice Provost, College of Doctoral Studies
University of Phoenix

Date Approved:_____

ABSTRACT

Start text here; do not indent. Abstracts must be between 150 and 250 words and must be presented as a single paragraph. The abstract should not include any citations. Describe the problem and purpose being addressed and indicate why and to whom the findings are important. Summarize the research question(s). Briefly describe the research method, design, population, sample size, and data analysis procedures. Identify the results and any key conclusions or recommendations that capture the heart of the research. Conclude with a statement of implications for practitioners and leader within the field of study.

DEDICATION

[*To be indented and completed upon full dissertation completion*]

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

[*To be indented and completed upon full dissertation completion*]

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

[*Only include a list of tables if there are two or more tables. Use title case, defined as capitalizing key words, for table titles.*]

LIST OF FIGURES

[*Only include a List of Figures if there are two or more figures. Use title case, defined as capitalizing key words, for figure titles.*]

Table of Contents

Chapter 1

Introduction

(Note that "Introduction" is the chapter title)

No *introduction* heading before the first paragraph of the introductory text. The introduction serves to engage the reader by discussing the overall research topic and background information to your proposed study. A good introduction should describe the broad foundations of your study and indicate the general scope of your study but should not go into so much detail that later sections such as the purpose, problem, and methodology become irrelevant. The introduction can also provide an overview of the sections that will appear in Chapter 1.

Background of the Problem

This section should lead up to the statement of the problem in order to create the context of the problem for the readers. In this section, you will want to draw upon the origins of the issues from which the problem is based upon. Be sure to integrate appropriate references to evidence the existence of a problem. Your discussion should reflect why the research problem is of important social concern or theoretical interest. This section is typically several pages in length.

Problem Statement

This section must clearly identify the problem. Include the phrase "The problem is…" to allow the reader to distinguish the issue driving the study. The problem *must* be supported with citations. A researchable problem is not simply a gap in the literature or a lack of information; a research problem is a documented *existing social issue* for which there is not a known solution or an effective solution. Review the CDS Dissertation Guide *Problem Statement* section associated with your selected design to ensure that this

section *aligns* with your design. This section is typically brief at less than one page in length.

Purpose of the Study

This section should concisely explain the focus of your study. Begin this section with the method and design you have selected and provide a clear statement of the research objectives of your study. Provide a brief description of the means through which the goals of your study will be achieved and the geographic location of the study. When conducting a case study, which requires multiple sources of data, ensure that those sources are identified. For quantitative or mixed method designs include the study variables and instruments to be used to collect the data. Review the *Purpose Statement* section associated with your selected design to ensure that this section *aligns* with your design. This section is typically brief at less than one page in length.

Population and Sample

Describe the population by discussing the criteria that you will use for your study participants. Also, briefly discuss your sampling type and sample size. If your study will not include participants or primary data, then briefly explain your proposed sources of data.

Significance of the Study

The significance sections explain why the study is a unique approach to the problem to be investigated, potential benefit/benefactors from the proposed study, and the ways in which the study results might make an original contribution to the field. Discuss why this study important and to whom. Describe the potential contribution this research may make to current and future studies and thought and how the results of this research might add to leadership knowledge and literature. Review the CDS Dissertation Guide

"*Significance of the Study*" section associated with your selected design to ensure that this section *aligns* with your design. This section is typically brief at less than one page in length.

Nature of the Study

This section should include a description of the general means through which the goals of the study will be achieved. In this section, you will present a synopsis and justification of the *research method and design* for your study. Provide an overview discussion of the research method (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed) and the appropriateness of the method for addressing the purpose of the study. Additionally, discuss why your proposal research design is more appropriate than two or three other possible research designs. For studies with a specific type, such as a case study, also support the selected type. Also provide a brief overview of the proposed instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis. This section is typically 1 to 3 pages in length.

Research Questions/Hypotheses

(*Only include "hypotheses" in the heading if applicable*)

In this section you will state your research questions and sub-questions, if appropriate. Please number the questions such as R1, R2, and so forth. Qualitative studies require at least two research questions and typically include about four. For quantitative studies include at least two sets of hypotheses. Review the CDS Dissertation Guide *Research Questions/Hypotheses* section associated with your selected design for specific information.

Theoretical or Conceptual Framework

(*One or the other—delete either theoretical or conceptual from the heading*)

The framework should place the study in perspective among existing theories or conceptual models and provide a framework related to the research topic. The discussion should reflect the broad theoretical area under which the research falls and reflect familiarity with germinal and current theories in the field. Remember that a theoretical framework is typically used for a quantitative study to model the theoretical relationships between the variables; a conceptual framework is typically used for a qualitative study and consists of several theories that underpin the topic. The framework should only introduce readers to the relevant theories; this discussion will be expanded in Chapter 2.

Definition of Terms

This section is only required if any operational terms or words are used in a unique way in this study. Any definitions must be supported with citations.

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

State any assumptions that you will be using as a basis for your study. Limitations are issues that the researcher cannot control. In contrast, delimitations define how you are choosing to control or scope your research. Also mention generalizability of the study findings. Note that qualitative studies are not generalizable to the population.

Chapter Summary

The discussion should summarize key points presented in Chapter 1. Information should be presented in a discussion context. Supporting citations should be provided for key points. The chapter summary should end with a transition to next chapter such as “Chapter 2 will...” or “In Chapter 2…”.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Begin with an introduction with no section heading. Remind the reader of the study topics and the foundational theories that drove the review of the literature.

Title Searches and Documentation

Describe the approach that you used to search for relevant documentation including key words used to search for publications. You can opt to include a table in this section to describe the numbers of journals, books, or other sources used for your various topics.

Historical Content

Generally, historical content is defined as over 5 years old. Include subsections for each of the various topics related to your study. The topic subsections should be presented in order from the broadest topic to the narrowest topic. Include both germinal content and content that is considered historical based on its publication date. It is crucial that you do not develop your literature review as merely a series of annotated bibliographies that discuss one source after another. It is crucial to synthesize the sources by comparing and contrasting the various perspectives on each topic. Include subheadings to delineate between various historical content topics.

Current Content

Generally, current content is less than 5 years old. Include the same subsections that you used in the historical content unless there is no current literature for a specific topic. Here again it is important to synthesize the sources—compare and contrast the various perspectives on each topic. It is important to describe all perspectives of each research topic including any controversial literature rather than presenting only literature

that supports your own perspective in order to create credibility. Include subheadings to delineate between various current content topics.

Theoretical or Conceptual Framework Literature

(*One or the other; must reflect the type of framework used in Chapter 1*)

The framework in Chapter 1 should only have introduced readers to the relevant theories. This section should include subsections for each of the relevant theories and discuss supporting germinal and current literature on those theories.

Methodology Literature

Describe the various studies that have been accomplished within your topic area. Focus on the methodologies that have been used in research and on the findings of those studies. Key objectives are to address what has already been accomplished in previous research and to support that your methodology will add to the body of knowledge.

Research Design Literature

In Chapter 1 you briefly described your selected research design. This section should expand on that discussion and include support from several design methodologists including the germinal methodologists associated with the design.

Conclusions

It is important to recognize that this section is not the chapter “conclusion”; it is “conclusions”, meaning what did you conclude from the literature? Focus on what you derived from the literature you reviewed and remember to cite each assertion.

Chapter Summary

The discussion should summarize key points presented in Chapter 2. Information should be presented in a discussion context. Supporting citations should be provided for

key points. The chapter summary should end with a transition to next chapter such as “Chapter 3 will...” or “In Chapter 3...”.

Please note that Chapter 2 should be expanded to 30 to 50 pages prior to submitting the complete proposal for review.

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

No heading for the introduction. Remind the reader of the purpose and objectives of the study. Introduce the contents of the chapter.

Research Method and Design Appropriateness

Expand on the Chapter 1 discussion by supporting selection of the research method and design. Provide a detailed overview discussion of the research method (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed) and the appropriateness of the method for addressing the purpose of the study. Additionally, include a detailed description of why your proposal research design is more appropriate than two or three other possible research designs within the selected method.

Research Questions/Hypotheses

This section should reiterate the research questions and any hypotheses introduced in Chapter 1.

Population and Sample

Discuss the population for the proposed study, defined as the pool of potential participants for the study. If the study will include a stratified sample discuss the various population groups to be included. Follow the population discussion with a description of the sample size and *how the sample size was established*. For stratified samples discuss the sample size to be obtained from each population group. For studies that will not include primary data use an alternate heading such as “Data Sources” and discuss the proposed sources of the study data, such as archival data. Ensure that you collect demographic data from the participants, including any data relevant to the study topic such as organizational position and experience in years, to include in Chapter 4.

Informed Consent and Confidentiality

Discuss how you will obtain informed consent from any participants and describe any signed permissions already obtained including Permissions to Use Premises, Permission to Use Data, Permission to Use Survey, and so forth. Describe how any confidential data will be stored and later destroyed. Refer to appendices such as the Informed Consent Form; for example, “See Appendix A for the Informed Consent Form”.

Instrumentation

Describe any instrumentation to be used to collect primary data such as qualitative questionnaires, interview protocols, or surveys. It is important to include a table to indicate how the instrumentation items, defined as interview questions or survey questions, align to the research questions or hypotheses. Refer to appendices such as the instrumentation.

Field Test or Pilot Study

Qualitative studies require a field test on original narrative data collection instruments. Note that field tests must be conducted prior to proposal approval; therefore, the field test and its results must be described here in Chapter 3. Original quantitative instruments require use of a pilot study to produce validity and reliability data; however, pilot studies cannot be conducted prior to proposal and IRB approval. Therefore, the plan to use a pilot study should be described in Chapter 3, and the results should be discussed in Chapter 4. Mixed-method studies may require both a field test and a pilot test.

Credibility and Transferability or Validity and Reliability

For qualitative studies, include a section on credibility and transferability or trustworthiness to discuss how these attributes will be accomplished within the study.

Include any relevant discussion regarding how the various sources will be triangulated. For quantitative studies, include a section on validity and reliability. Quantitative instruments that are commercially produced or have been published should have validity and reliability data available. Original quantitative instruments will require use of a pilot study following IRB approval to produce validity and reliability data. Mixed-method studies often require discussion of both credibility and transferability, and validity and reliability.

Data Collection

This section must include a complete description of the processes to be used to collect any primary or secondary data. Include discussion of how any participants will be recruited for participation and describe any permissions required to collect these data. If data will be collected in phases, such as during a Delphi study with two or more rounds, a case study with multiple sources of data, a study with a stratified sample, a quantitative study with more than one survey instrument, or a mixed-method study, describe each phase of data collection process clearly.

Data Analysis

Data analysis section must include a detailed description of the processes or statistical techniques to be used for analysis of any primary or secondary data. Proposed data analyses techniques must clear and appropriate to the research design and a sufficient level of detail must be provided. Qualitative analysis steps must be described and must align with the selected design, such as the constant comparative approach for a grounded theory study and a modified van Kaam process or Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen process for phenomenology. When applicable, quantitative data analysis discussion must

include information on the statistical tests to be performed, Alpha levels for hypotheses testing, and whether the testing will be one-tailed or two-tailed.

Chapter Summary

The discussion should summarize key points presented in Chapter 3. Information should be presented in a discussion context. Supporting citations should be provided for key points. Although Chapter 4 is not submitted as part of the proposal the chapter summary should end with a transition to next chapter such as “Chapter 4 will...” or “In Chapter 4...”.

Chapter 4

Analysis and Results

No heading for the introduction. Remind the reader of the purpose and objectives of the study. Introduce the contents of the chapter. Keep in mind that Chapter 4 should solely describe the analysis process and the study results; therefore, *no citations should be included in this chapter*.

Research Questions/Hypotheses

This section should reiterate the research questions and any hypotheses. Ensure consistency in the wording with previous chapters.

Data Collection

Provide a detailed discussion of the informed consent and data collection process used. Additionally, if the actual data collection process differs from the proposed process as described in Chapters 1 and 3 revise those chapters to reflect the actual process used. Note that if data collection is performed in multiple phases, such as in a Delphi technique or a mixed-method study, Chapter 4 should include subsections for each of these data collection and data analysis phases.

Demographics

Describe the study participants by stating information such as gender, age range, ethnicity, region, occupation, years of experience, or other relevant demographics. To avoid confidentiality issues, collect and report age in ranges such as 20 to 30, 30 to 40, and so forth. Include the demographic information as text, tables, or a combination or text and tables. However, report the demographics individually without linking the demographic data together or to a participant. For example, the reader should *not* be able to determine that Participant 1 was an Asian female teacher in her 30s who lives in the

North West region since this information may compromise confidentiality. For studies that did not include primary data use an alternate heading such as “Data Sources” and discuss the sources of the study data.

Pilot Study

(*Include this section only for original quantitative instruments*)

Original quantitative instruments require use of a pilot study to produce validity and reliability data. For any research that included a pilot study report the results in this section.

Data Analysis

Data analysis section must include a *detailed* description of the processes or statistical techniques used for analysis of any primary or secondary data. If the actual data analysis process was altered from the proposed process revise Chapters 1 and 3 to reflect the procedures actually used. The description of data analysis steps should include a level of detail that would allow a competent researcher to reproduce your analysis.

For narrative data analyze these data individually for each research question rather than for each interview or questionnaire question. Similar to data collection, if the analysis is performed in multiple phases, such as in a Delphi technique or a mixed-method study, Chapter 4 should include subsections for each of these data analysis phases.

Results

Effective reporting of the results is extremely important. For qualitative narrative data the results are typically reported as themes. Each theme should be reported in a separate sub-section and should be numbered such as Theme 1, Theme 2, and so forth. Typically, the number of major themes for a qualitative study are three to eight. Consider

that each theme will need to be compared and contrasted against existing literature in Chapter 5, so exceeding eight themes is not recommended.

Themes should be phrases or short complete sentences that reflect the objective of the study. For example, a theme of “Communication” is too vague to be effective, whereas “Insufficient communication from administration” or “Insufficient communication from administration was a barrier to effective teaching strategies” conveys a much clearer context. Each theme must be supported by example narrative, such as three to five examples of brief participant quotes. Identify the participants using their code, for example “P3 stated ‘If we could only get clear direction from the principal it would make our jobs so much easier’”.

For quantitative data, include the analysis tables and describe the results of the analysis. Include a sub-section for each research question and reiterate the associated hypotheses. Discuss the meaning of the results in terms of supporting or not supporting the null hypotheses, and clearly describe the meaning ascribed to those results.

Regardless of the research method, include any outlier data. Do not compare the results to literature in Chapter 4; save this information for Chapter 5.

Chapter Summary

The discussion should summarize the chapter and *reiterate the results* presented in Chapter 4. The chapter summary should end with a transition to Chapter 5.

Chapter 5

Conclusions and Recommendations

No heading for the introduction. Remind the reader of the purpose and objectives of the study. Introduce the contents of the chapter.

Research Questions/Hypotheses

This section should reiterate the research questions and any hypotheses. Ensure consistency in the wording with previous chapters.

Discussion of Findings

The objective of this section is to compare and contrast the study results to existing literature. For qualitative and mixed-method studies with resultant themes, this section must include sub-sections for each theme. For quantitative and mixed-method studies with hypotheses, this section must include sub-sections for the results of each set of hypotheses. *Compare or contrast each result to three to five published sources.* Note once you have established the study results you may need to slightly expand the Chapter 2 literature review to include relevant information or information that has been recently published.

Limitations

In contrast to the limitations discussed in Chapter 1, the Chapter 5 limitations section should focus solely on unforeseen limitations that were revealed while conducting the study. Remember that limitations are out of the control of the researcher.

Recommendations to Leaders and Practitioners

Keep in mind that the entire study culminates in this section so consider this discussion carefully. Based on the research questions and the results, convey how leaders

and practitioners might mitigate the *problem* underlying the study. Consider including a recommendation for each of the results.

Be very specific in the recommendations and consider ending the section with a table to reiterate the recommendations for each of the results. Additionally, ensure that the recommendations align with the research design. For grounded theory studies include a theory or a theoretical model, and for action research clearly describe the recommended actions for leaders and practitioners to pursue. Whenever appropriate include a model in this section. Remember that the goal of a practitioner doctorate is to improve your field of practice, which is accomplished through your recommendations.

Recommendations for Future Research

When completing this section consider how you might have accomplished the study differently. Also consider what you have uncovered that might be further explored through additional research. Include three or four specific recommendations for further study and include recommended methodologies.

Chapter Summary

Summarize only Chapter 5 rather than the entire dissertation. Reiterate each of the study objectives or research questions and state the study findings. End with a strong cogent statement that conveys what the study has contributed to the body of knowledge.

A researcher reflection section can also be included in Chapter 5, and this section can be written in first-person language.

References

[*Use hanging indent format and double space the entire list.*]

Table of Contents

Appendix A

Title

[*Start section text here*] [Note: If including permission or consent documents, you must remove all personal information including phone numbers and email addresses.]

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

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Table of Contents

Appendix B: Document Change Log

Changes to this Document Log

Date:	Page Number:	Change(s) to Document:
Jan. 31, 2019	43	Link fixes to Educational and Healthcare program assessment
March 7, 2019	3	Dissertation extension courses (1-week and 3-week) are available and require written Chair and URM approval prior to scheduling.
March 21, 2019	2	Phrase changed to Phase in two locations
March 21, 2019	90, 118	The following statement added: As an appendix include a blank version of the *Informed Consent Form*, only, and remove all other IRB documents and research site and participant identifiers.
August 5, 2019	120	Final Dissertation Edit -- spaces between sentences changed from one space to two spaces.
January 30, 2020	Various	Updated for APA 7th edition
August 20, 2020	Various	Updated for APA 7th edition
October 28, 2020	Various	Updated links in document; provided clarity on Case Study
March 3, 2021	27 & 36	Delphi and Narrative RQs revised
May 10, 2021	46	Statistical Tests link no longer working. Updated Statistical Tests link to SAGE – Which Stats Test
June 10, 2021	Throughout	Removed out-of-print recommended resources; added TOC tab at top of pages for easy access to TOC
July 2021	Throughout	Reformatted entire document, updated graphics